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PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION.

PSALM 133, 1.—Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

Every doctrine and precept, whether of divine or human origin, is valuable in proportion to its tendency to promote the happiness of man, by enlightening his mind, improving his heart and regulating his conduct. According to this rule, the friends of the Bible ascribe to it the character of supreme, of divine excellence. Nor is this a mere assumption without proof; or an opinion for which they can assign no better reason than the prejudice of education. This proof is derived from the character and deportment of those who furnish unquestionable evidence that they really understand and believe its doctrines, and sincerely endeavour to obey its precepts. The bitterest enemy of divine revelation could not, and indeed, does not, expect to learn its tendency from those who neither believe its doctrines nor obey its precepts. This proof is as satisfactory, and as well calculated to produce conviction in every candid mind, as that of mathematisks. It is furnished by every sincere disciple of Jesus Christ, in proportion to his attainments in the divine life. In this manner the truth and tendency of the passage, placed at the head of these remarks, may be ascertained. The spirit of the Psalmist's observation is frequently given in the form of a precept: *Let brotherly love continue; see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.*

In the life of Mrs Graham—a book which ought to be in general circulation—we find a very happy illustration of the

good effects of christian harmony and union. Page 50, 2d edition. "She (Mrs. G.) and her venerable companion, Mrs. Sarah Hoffman, second directress of the widow's society, travelled many a day and many a step together in the walks of charity. Mrs. G. was a Presbyterian, Mrs. H. an Episcopalian. Those barriers, of which such a thundering use has been made, by sectarians, to separate the children of God, fell down between these two friends at the cry of affliction, and were consumed on the altar of christian love. Arm in arm, heart to heart, they visited the abodes of distress, dispensing temporal aid from the purse of charity, and spiritual comfort from the word of life. One has already entered into rest, the other must soon follow."

These excellent ladies were members of a society, in the city of New-York, formed for the relief of indigent widows, and appear to have been its active agents. During the week they were thus united in searching out and relieving the widow and the fatherless. On the Lord's day they repaired to their respective churches, and poured forth their devotion to the Father of mercies, in modes of worship, different from each other. In singing, the one rose up, the other kept her seat; in prayer, the one kneeled, the other stood up; the one expressed her consent with an audible voice, the other only in the language of the heart. These, and all other differences which distinguish the two denominations, were well known to them; but did not separate their hearts, nor even create any coolness in their affections. They dwelt, and laboured together in unity. The widow's heart singing for joy; fatherless children rising up and calling them blessed, are the proof of the goodness of this union. The smile of complacency with which they met each other, the cheerfulness with which they performed their weekly and daily labour of love, declare how pleasant they found it. Their time, when together, was not spent in useless controversy respecting their religious peculiarities; but in devising by what means they might secure the acceptance of relief so as to give the least pain to the feelings of those who had seen better days; in comparing the cases of different sufferers together, so as to make the most judicious appropriation of the little fund committed to their care; in expressing thankfulness to God for that degree of misery which they had been instrumental in removing, and in mutual sympathies over that suffering which it was not in their power to relieve. When separated, no pride of victory, on the one part, nor mortification of defeat on the other, accompanied them to their retirement—feelings, too often the result of religious contention. The

remembrance of each other, when absent, was associated with no warm altercations, no unguarded words, no wounded feelings, but with the abodes of indigence they had visited, the widow's and orphan's grateful tears they had witnessed. They meditated no renewed attack, studied no uncharitable or reproachful insinuations against each other's religious sentiments or modes of worship. They anticipated the hour of meeting with real delight, and thought of the desponding hearts which the next day would permit them to cheer.

Their hearts were *knit together in love*. Nor was this happy union owing to their ignorance of those reasons usually offered, in support of the different modes of worship which they found it expedient to observe. With these reasons they were probably as well acquainted as those are, in whose minds they are associated with proselyting zeal, intolerant bigotry and exclusive claims to divine favour. In the character and deportment of each other, these pious ladies had the best recommendation of their respective modes of worship. If Mrs. G. had doubted the utility of using forms of prayer, the charity and diligence of Mrs. H. in doing good would remove these doubts. If Mrs. H. had been disposed to question the lawfulness of extempore prayer, the enlightened zeal and exemplary life of Mrs. G. would banish these scruples.

If these two disciples of Jesus had thought proper to converse on their religious differences, we have no doubt they would have done it without leaving any unpleasant impression on the mind. Indeed, a spirit of love, meekness and forbearance is the only one with which religious controversy should be conducted. And yet, in this as in many other cases, those who possess least of this spirit, who are least qualified for the task, are most forward to undertake it. Charity would cease to weep over the sad effects of religious controversy if it were always guided by such a spirit.

Every heart, we are persuaded, will cordially approve the harmony which subsisted between these two "honorable women." If we approve, why do we not *go and do likewise*? The differences which are often the cause of shyness, and even hostility between christians, are no greater, perhaps the very same, which existed between these pious females; and yet, *behold, how they loved one another!* They have taught us that it is possible to live together in unity. May our own experience teach us how good and how pleasant it is, thus to live!—

N. S.

HORÆ BIBLICÆ.

Of the Ancient Versions of the New Testament.

We learn from the Acts of the Apostles, that the first preachers of the gospel travelled from one country to another, with indefatigable zeal and perseverance, bearing the messages of truth and mercy. And ecclesiastical history informs us, that they penetrated into all parts of the known world, and every where established churches. We might expect that the writings which contain the doctrines and precepts of christianity, would be translated from the original Greek into the languages of the antient people who received this religion. Accordingly there are various old Versions extant, which are regarded by critics as highly valuable in establishing the general integrity of the Greek text, and in ascertaining the true sense of difficult passages. Of these we now propose to give a very brief account.

Biblical critics have divided the ancient versions of the New Testament into three classes—The Oriental, the Latin, and the Western.

The principal *Oriental* versions are the Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, Armenian, and Persian.

There are two Syriac versions, the *Peschito* and the *Philoxenian*. The first is the most ancient: it is universally believed that it was made either in the first, or very early in the second century. The celebrated critic Michaelis says that it is the very best translation of the Greek Testament which he ever read, for the general ease, elegance, and fidelity with which it has been executed. It is used and held in the highest estimation, by all the christian sects in Syria and the East. It was first known in Europe in 1552, was printed at Vienna in 1555, at Leyden 1708, 9, and reprinted in 1717. A beautiful edition was printed at London 1816 for the use of the Syrian christians in India, at the expense of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The second or *Philoxenian* version derives its name from Philoxenus bishop of Hierapolis in Syria. It was finished in the year 508; and was afterwards revised by Thomas of Harkel or Haraclea in 616. It was brought to Europe about 1750.

The Gospels, Acts, and Catholic epistles have been published in England. This version is greatly inferior in value to the *Peschito* both in style and accuracy. It is not however without its use.

There is also a *Syriac translation of Jerusalem*, as it is called, which embraces only a part of the New Testament. It has never been published.

There are two translations of the New Testament extant in the *Egyptian language*—one in the *Coptic* or ancient dialect of lower Egypt; the other in the *Sahidic* or dialect of upper Egypt. The *Coptic* version is thought to have been executed prior to the third century. Many learned men, however, refer it to the fifth century. It was published by Daniel Wilkins at Oxford in 1716.

The *Sahidic* version, in all probability, was executed in the second century. All that remains of it was published by Dr. Ford at Oxford in 1799. These two are independent translations.

There are numerous *Arabic* translations of the New Testament, made, it is believed, between the seventh and eleventh centuries. The editions of the version in this language are numerous.

The *Ethiopic* version is supposed to have been made by Frumentius, who about 330 first preached Christianity in Ethiopia. It is made in what is called the *Gheez* dialect; or that which is appropriated to religion in Abyssinia. It was first published at Rome A. D. 1548—49. There is also a translation of the New Testament in the *Amharic* or common dialect of Ethiopia.

The *Armenian* version of the New Testament is unanimously ascribed to Miesrob, the inventor of the Armenian alphabet, and to the patriarch Isaac, at the end of the fourth or early in the fifth century. It is thought by some to be a version of great importance: but it is less valuable because in several instances it has been made conformable to the *Vulgate*, or common *Latin* version.

There are extant two *Persian* versions of the four gospels, the most antient and valuable of which was first printed in the *London Polyglott* by bishop Walton from a manuscript in the possession of Dr. Pococke, dated 1314. It was made from the *Syriac*. The other, which was published in 1652—57, it is believed, was made from the *Greek*.

Latin Versions. In the early part of the second century, the New Testament was translated into *Latin*. And as this was then becoming a general language, copies were quickly multiplied; and alterations either accidental or designed became very numerous. To remedy this evil, Jerome, the most learned of the fathers, in the fourth century, undertook to revise this translation, and render it more conformable to the original *Greek*. Jerome's version is used by all the Romish

churches, and goes under the name of the *Vulgate*. The council of Trent in the 16th century, declared it *authentic*, and commanded that the *vulgate* alone should be used, when the Bible is publicly read. There have been many editions of this version. The principal are those of Robert Stephens, of the divines of Louvain, of Pope Sixtus V, and Clement VIII. These two last editions, though made by men claiming infallibility differ in more than four thousand instances. [But the remark applies not to the New Testament but to the whole Bible.]

The *vulgate* is a very important translation to the biblical critic; it often gives the sense of the original with greater accuracy than the more modern versions.

The old Latin version, in use before Jerome's revision, generally goes under the name *Itala*; and the fragments of it are regarded as very valuable.

The principal ancient western translations are the *Gothic*, the *Sclavonic*, and the *Anglo-saxon*.

The Gothic version was made from the original Greek, by Ulphilas, a celebrated bishop of the Mæso-Goths, who assisted in the council of Constantinople A. D. 359. The antiquity and general fidelity of this translation give it a high value with the critics. Unhappily however it has not come down to us entire. It contains a considerable portion of the gospels, and fragments of Paul's epistles.

The manuscript is called the *Codex Argenteus*. It is of a quarto size; the leaves are vellum, and are stained with a violet colour. On this ground the letters, which are all capitals, are painted in silver, except the initial characters, which are in gold. It is in the university of Upsal. Several editions have been published.

The Mæso-Gothic translation of Paul's epistles, and also those parts of the gospels wanting in the *Codex Argenteus* have recently been discovered in the Ambrosian library at Milan. This is regarded as a discovery of great importance.

The *Sclavonic*, or old Russian translation, was executed from the original Greek in the ninth century by two brothers Cyril and Methodius. It is said to be a very literal translation, and to agree in a remarkable manner with the most ancient Greek manuscripts.

The *Anglo-Saxon* versions. In the year 735, the venerable Bede translated the Bible into Saxon. There were other Saxon versions of a whole or a part of the Bible of later date. These versions were made from the Latin, and are of use in determining the reading of the *Vulgate*.

Various uses may be made of these antient versions. That alone which we shall now notice is of high importance. It

is the evidence afforded by these translations of the general integrity of the Greek text; or in other words the evidence that the genuine writings of the apostles have come down to us. We have given a brief account of several independent versions, made from the original in different countries, and in different ages, from the beginning of the second century, immediately after forming the canon of the New Testament, down to the eighth century. Critics have diligently collated them with the original Greek, and notwithstanding the mistakes of transcribers, there is a wonderful agreement between the translations and the original, and between one translation and another. The variations are comparatively of small importance. This then is decisive. We have the genuine writings of the apostles.

BRIEF EXPOSITIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

Matt. xx. 23. “And he said unto them, ye shall indeed drink of my cup, and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with; but to sit on my right hand and on my left, is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father.”

Our Saviour, here, is made to say, that to sit on his right hand and on his left, *is not his to give*: Yet in other passages he speaks on this subject without limitation of his power; as John x. 27, 28. “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.” To remove any difficulty that might arise here, let it be understood that in the passage above, the words printed in italics are all supplied by the translators to complete the sense: let these then be struck out, and a slight change in the version (which the original will very well bear) will make all plain.

—“But to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give except to those, for whom it is prepared by my Father.”

The passage thus rendered shows the perfect unity of purpose and design in the Father and the Son, according to repeated declarations of our Saviour recorded by John in the gospel by him.

John viii. 10, 11, “When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where

are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, no man Lord. And Jesus said unto her, neither do I condemn thee."

This passage has given occasion to some foolish and malignant remarks, as though our Saviour did not disapprove the conduct of this woman. The crime, with which she was charged, it is well known was punished by stoning to death, according to the law of Moses. The Scribes and Pharisees brought the woman to our Lord with the design to ensnare him. Should he decide contrary to the Mosaic law, this would give them an opportunity of lessening his favour with the people.—And should he pass sentence of death on her, then they might accuse him to the Roman governor, as one that interfered with his authority. Our Lord aware of the wicked device, escapes the snare by an admirable use of judicial terms. "Hath nobody *passed sentence* on thee? Neither do I *pass sentence* on thee."—It is one thing to condemn the conduct of a thief or a murderer; and entirely another to sit as a judge and pass sentence on him.

2 Cor. viii. "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia."

The phrase, *Do you to wit*, is entirely obsolete, and probably unintelligible to most readers. It signifies to *make known to one*, or as we say, *to acquaint one with a thing*.

James i. 8. "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." That is, A man unsteady in his opinions, is inconstant in his conduct.

1 John v. 90. "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. *This* [He, referring to Christ, the nearest antecedent] is the true God, and eternal life."

This is a strong declaration of the divinity of our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

There are several passages of scripture, which would be much plainer than they are, if proper names used in them, were translated. The following have been collected as instances of this—It may be observed, however, that proper names in Hebrew are generally significant.

Gen. iv. 1.—And bare Cain (i. e. *acquisition*) for she said I have gotten (*acquired*) a man child from the Lord.

Gen. iv. 25.—Called his name Seth (i. e. *substitute*) for God, saith she, hath *substituted* to me another son instead of Abel.

Gen. xvi. 11.—And shalt call his name Ishmael (i. e. *God heareth*) because Jehovah hath heard thine affliction.

Gen. iii. 20.—Adam called his wife's name Eve (i. e. *life-giver*) because she was to be the *mother of all the living*.

Gen. xxix. 32.—Whose name she called Reuben, (i. e. *behold a son*) for the Lord said she hath *beheld* my humiliation.

— 34.—My husband will now at length be *attached* to me, because I have borne him three sons—His name therefore she called Levi (i. e. *attachment*.)

— xxx. 1.—For women will call me *happy*—So she called his name Asher (i. e. *happy*.)

Ruth i. 20.—Call me not Naomi, (*pleasant*,) call me Mara, (*bitter*) for the Almighty hath dealt very *bitterly* with me.

Many other passages might be rendered more intelligible in the same manner. These are produced as a specimen.

ON SOME OF THE BAD CONSEQUENCES THAT MAY RESULT FROM THE PRESENT SCARCITY OF MONEY.

A correspondent, from whom we should be glad to hear often-er than we do, sent us a very sensible well written little essay on some of the probable advantages that may result from the embarrassments of the times. It gave us pleasure to communicate his thoughts to our readers. But it has since occurred to us, that evil may be apprehended, as well as good ex-pected from the present circumstances of the country. And if this is so, it is as much our duty to give warning of the evil, that it may be avoided; as to point out the good, that it may be obtained. We shall, under this conviction, mention several classes of persons, whose best interests may be injur-ed by these evil times, on which we have fallen.

And first, we think that it is a time of trial and of danger to *christians*—It is well known to all, who know any thing of vital religion, that our graces cannot flourish and our souls prosper, without watchfulness, prayer, meditation, and a diligent use of the various means of religious improvement ap-pointed by God. But this use of the means of improvement requires *some* time, and much attention. It is not a mere out-ward service; but one which must carry with it the under-standing and the affections. It is easy to see that the pres-ure of worldly business, the cares of life, and deep anxiety respecting pecuniary arrangements, are unfavourable to that attentive perusal of the scriptures, that engagedness in prayer,

that deliberate and careful self-examination, and that patient hearing of the word of God, which are necessary to our growth in grace and increase in divine knowledge. It often happens that, when we most need the soothing and tranquilizing influences and powerful consolations of religion, we have placed ourselves precisely in that situation which most disqualifies us for the participation of them. When we most need the comfort, which flows from communion with God, we are most occupied with the cares of this life. In such a time as this, a christian has need of double watchfulness to keep the world out of the house of God, or rather to keep his thoughts and affections within it, while he is seated there. The same applies to secret and family devotion, and every other religious exercise. There is danger both in prosperity and adversity, in the successful pursuit of business, and in the time of embarrassment. And the danger is the greater at present, on account of the previous habits and pursuits of christians. They had, generally, been carried on by the stream, and had engaged largely in schemes of traffic or of speculation; and now disappointed and pressed, and urgently called on as they are, there is great danger of their being drawn off from the service of God, and losing much of their religious sensibility.

The present time is one, in which all find it necessary to curtail expenses, and practise a rigid economy. The habits of living, into which we had generally fallen, might, with great propriety, be called luxurious. In food, drink, and clothing we have been accustomed to expend much more than is necessary. Christians, in the present day, when efforts are making to diffuse throughout the world the blessed religion of Jesus, have been accustomed to contribute both for their own religious improvement, and for the benefit of those who are destitute. But in this decrease of religious sensibility, and this increase of worldly care, is there not danger lest the curtailment that must be made, should fall first and principally on expenditures for the support, and extension of religion? Is it, or is it not a common case for professors of christianity to complain of the dreadful pressure of the times, and say how sorry they are that they cannot indulge their inclination to aid in the support of the gospel or the christianizing of the heathen, and, amidst the uncomfortable feelings which the subject excites, go to the side-board and take a drink of grog or toddy? Is it, or is it not a common case for them to talk of the painful necessity of withdrawing their subscriptions from this and the othur laudable design, at a table where there is a greater variety of food, than it is good for the health to indulge in? Passions and pleasure are incomparably more expensive than duty; and the importunate calls

and clamour of the former, are exceedingly apt to drown the still small voice of the latter. Let christians look to it then, and see whether they are in no danger here.

But this is a time of danger to those, *who are destitute of the powerful control of religious principle*. As the pressure of pecuniary embarrassment increases, the temptation to do what ought not to be done, for relief, gathers strength. There are a thousand ways of *taking advantage*, and avoiding the claims of justice, which lie open to a man in embarrassment; and often it requires principles of great sturdiness to keep him in the straight path of true virtue. This remark applies with vast force to a community, in which poverty is regarded as a disgrace, and the principal distinction in society arises from wealth. It often happens, that the opprobrium of poverty is the only object of horror; and while the man is appalled by its approach, he does that which virtue and conscience forbid. Hence the necessity of a higher principle, than mere regard to reputation. And hence the expediency of establishing in practice, other distinctions than those which exist between *rich* and *poor*. But we shall take some other occasion to insist on these topics.

This is a time of great danger to men, who, without any fixed principles and confirmed habits, *have experienced a decline in business and want full occupation*. Men are never more exposed to the ruinous consequences of dissipation, than when in the circumstances just mentioned. Uneasy and restless, often without the resources of learning, and the still more abundant resources, and the more mighty restraints of religion, they seek, in the various modes of dissipation, relief from the intolerable feelings produced by the want of that *interest* which is created by the active pursuits of honest industry. Hence there is great reason to apprehend that the *more decent* sort of people will indulge in *secret intemperance*; and that others will frequent *rag shops* and *tippling houses*; will engage in *petty horse-racing* and *cock-fighting*, and in various kinds of *low and ruinous gambling*. The uneducated and irreligious poor are in very great danger, in times like the present. And we should not be at all surprised to learn that drunkenness and dissipation are on the increase among us.

While we make these remarks, we do think it due to our countrymen to say, that they have borne the terrible revolution that has taken place, on the whole, very well. True, we hear of thefts and robberies more frequently than in better times. But we believe that the great mass of our people are sound at the core; and we trust that the hope of bettering

their condition, which is offered by the boundless resources of our young and growing country, will sustain them in this time of trial and bear them through it with honour. But while we cherish this expectation, we think it right to drop these hints, and put the people on their guard.

We have another object in view. No man is in a condition to resist temptation, who has not some worthy object before him; who is not, without lively interest, engaged in a laudable pursuit. We would suggest to all who have been blessed with the opportunities of a good education, the expediency of engaging with all their heart in bettering the moral condition of the poor. The ingenuity of modern benevolence has devised a most efficient means of doing this by the institution of Sabbath Schools. As an illustration of this remark, we refer to the report of the Essex Sabbath School, published in this number. And to every reader we say, "Go and do thou likewise."

We urge, too, on all an increasing attention to the various means of religious instruction afforded in this country. The worship of God's house, when duly regarded, will have mighty efficacy in restraining all that is bad, and aiding in the cultivation of every good disposition, and every kindly affection.

We exhort christians to be faithful to their vows; to "be zealous and to repent" that they may, in these days of adversity and rebuke, enjoy all the important benefits, which their religion is calculated to afford.

We call on parents to remember what they owe to their children, and to society, and to "train up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," those whom God has committed to their care.

And we pray God to bless our country.

SHORT DISCOURSE FOR FAMILIES.

THE PARABLE OF THE BARREN FIG-TREE.

He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years, I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering, said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.—Luke xiii. 6—9.

A PARABLE is a similitude gathered from visible objects to express a moral or religious sentiment. In some parables, one single sentiment seems to be the specific object; but from most, a considerable number of moral truths may be fairly deduced. Our Lord often spake in parables. His reasons probably were, 1. that those who would not attend might remain in ignorance; 2. that those who sought instruction, might have a more full illustration of the truth; and 3. that truth might be conveyed to all future ages through a medium at once interesting and impressive. I shall proceed, first, to expound this parable of the barren fig-tree.

"We read, "A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard." This tree was planted in a better soil than ordinary, that it might enjoy every advantage conducing to fruitfulness. It was not planted by the side of the road, as fig-trees in the eastern countries frequently were, but in a soil well cultivated, as that mostly was which nourished the vines. The proprietor is here denominated "a certain man;" but this parabolical language represents to us God, the great proprietor of all things. He is the first cause of all, and "for his glory they are and were created." The parable speaks of a vineyard as the situation of this fig-tree, which appears highly emblematical of the church of God. The vineyards were enclosed with care, and cultivated with great attention; thus the church of God is a special enclosure, made by his particular choice, and for his pleasure. Here are many "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified." In this enclosure the fig-tree is pointed out, as distinguished from the wild uncultivated trees of the desert, by the toil and expense bestowed upon it, as well as by the situation in which it stood. Thus professors of the gospel appear to be planted in the church of God, as a sacred enclosure, over which he watches with peculiar care, and on which he bestows that attention, and those favours, which are not extended to a desert uncultivated world. The proprietor of the vineyard came and sought fruit upon this fig-tree, in common with the trees around, but he found none. After such peculiar advantages of fruitfulness had been afforded this tree, there had been a sufficient cause of discontent, if the fruit had been but small in quantity, or not of the best quality; but, that *none* was found, seemed to call loudly for the axe to be applied to the root, that a tree so unprofitable might be given for fuel to the flames. But pause and inquire, has not this unfruitful tree been characteristic of many professors in the church of God in all ages? Many, both under the Old and New Testament dispensation, great as their advantages have been, have

remained not only partially, but totally unfruitful. Every one, indeed, must find cause of humiliation that so little fruit has been produced, and even *that little* so unripe and defective, amidst peculiar religious advantages.

The parable, doubtless, had a primary reference to the Jewish church, and was intended by our Lord as a warning to the Jews of his own day, that, although God had borne long with them, a time of judicial visitation was approaching, when they should be destroyed. The Jewish church were, as this fig-tree, planted in a vineyard. They were planted by God in a fruitful soil. Divine ordinances were numerous, and the means of spiritual fruitfulness enjoyed by them were very great. They had been cultivated by a long succession of prophets, priests, and teachers; they were fenced on every side, and kept by the power of the Almighty, as his own sacred enclosure. Yet as a nation they were generally unfruitful. Whether we consider their rebellions in the wilderness, their numerous departures from God in the days of the judges, their unconquerable propensity to idolatry, under many of their kings, or their flagrant breaches of the whole moral law, after their return from the Babylonish captivity, to the days of our Lord, we find, in the frequent or disappointed visits of the proprietor of this fig-tree, a lively illustration of the long suffering of God, and the barrenness of the people of Israel. Hence the complaint of the prophet Isaiah, in a parable similar to that before us, chapter v. verses 1—7. Our Lord also, in the short but impressive parable before us, pronounced a solemn warning to them yet to repent, while it was the time of their merciful visitation. God had endured their rebellion with much long-suffering; and the parable was intended to announce, that, if protracted mercy were unavailing, a time of judgment would soon arrive. Then they might cry, but must necessarily cry in vain, "Lord, have mercy upon us;" "Good Lord, deliver us." "And now also," says John the Baptist, "the axe is laid unto the root of the tree; every tree that bringeth forth not good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire." That awful denunciation was, at the expiration of about forty years, fulfilled with circumstances of horror unparalleled in the history of the world. In Jerusalem alone, one million one hundred thousand perished: two hundred and fifty thousand in other places, and in many instances under circumstances the most horrid; while those that remained alive, might have chosen "strangling and death rather than life;" for, like cattle in the market, they were exposed throughout the Roman empire, to be sold for slaves; and when there were no more purchasers, thousands of the wretched remnant was deliberately murdered.

Unto us also the parable has a pointed application. God formed us for his glory, and, if we consider our distinguishing privileges as a nation, we shall find, that God may well expect better and more abundant fruit from us, than even from the Jews. But our nature is unfruitful. The heart of man produces only the apples of Sodom, instead of the figs of Palestine. Americans, however, should remember, that God, in infinite mercy, has planted them in a goodly soil. The land of our nativity is a vineyard, on which God has bestowed his constant care, and most abundant cultivation. Yet, how totally unfruitful are millions of the people; and even thousands, who pride themselves on their religious attainments. Would it not, therefore, be an act of the most unquestionable justice to cut us down as cumberers of the ground?

But let us now make the sentiment *personal*; for while we dwell upon it generally, it may excite speculation, but will never move the heart to contrition, nor humble a man in the presence of his injured and justly offended Lord. The proprietor of this fig-tree, we are told, "said unto the dresser of his vineyard, behold, these three years I come seeking fruit, on this fig-tree, and find none." In childhood, God comes seeking fruit, but how seldom is it found!" Every imagination of the thoughts of the young mind is evil continually. In youth, God comes again, but seldom does any fruit appear: "childhood and youth are vanity." In manhood, God visits us, but how often is there still no fruit! The manhood is occupied by the cares of life, and although the chief end of life is to glorify God, and enjoy him forever, of many it must be acknowledged, that "God is not in all their thoughts," as the author of their mercies, or the object of their highest regards. Hence then the righteous sentence is pronounced, "cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" This sentence was directed to the dresser of the vineyard; "and he answering, saith unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it; and if it bear fruit well; and if not, after that thou shalt cut it down." Thus Jesus with unspeakable grace, intercedes for barren professors, and pledges himself still further to replenish them with external means of fruitfulness. But let the unprofitable professor know, that a time of unmitigated indignation will soon arrive, when even the blessed Mediator will cease to interpose, or stay the hand of justice. "Lord, let it alone this year also, and if it bear fruit well, and if not, after that thou shalt cut it down." Old age will come, and then there will be no reprieve; nothing will remain but "a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation."

I now proceed secondly to draw several inferences from this parable:—and here it is evident,

1. That the leaves, or even the blossoms of profession, will not avail, if there be no fruit.

This fig-tree, probably, like that to which our Lord came when he was an hungered, exhibited a fair exterior, although, like that, it was unproductive. Suppose such a tree to be standing in your orchard, and every year to put forth leaves, and appear decked with verdure, would its green and flourishing aspect establish its title to occupy the ground on which it stood; or if it not only put forth leaves and branches, but year after year appeared in all the gaiety of vernal bloom, would the blossom be accepted as a sufficient apology for fruit? Would you not rather say, irrespective of all its gay appearance, “cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?”

Let professors take the moral to themselves. The exterior of religion is but like the leaves and blossoms of the tree; the dispositions of the heart are its fruit. “Ye shall know them by their *fruit*,” saith our Lord: “men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles.” “For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his fruit.” “The fruit of the Spirit is *love*,”—toward God and toward man: “*joy*,” that joy in the Holy Ghost, which arises from a sense of divine favour, and that delight which proceeds from intimate communion with the Father of Spirits: “*peace*” of conscience; peace with God; and, consequent on this experience, a peaceful disposition:—“*long suffering*,” amidst much provocation:—“*gentleness*,” in the whole spirit and deportment, thus disarming the wrathful; and a disposition easy to be entreated, when others by their unchristian conduct have put themselves in our power:—“*goodness*,” or a friendly benevolent disposition, inclined to do good unto others, irrespective of personal advantage to ourselves:—“*faith*,” in performing our engagements, and speaking truth with our neighbour:—“*meekness*,” or a subdued spirit, not addicted to rash anger, or vehement rage; for “a meek and quiet spirit is of great price in the sight of God:”—and finally, “*temperance*,” in the use of all lawful enjoyments, and a total abstinence from those gratifications which are unlawful. Brethren, “if we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit.”

When I see a man litigious instead of peaceable;—filled with rancour instead of love;—with carnal instead of spiritual joy;—impatient of contradiction, rather than long suffering;—easily provoked, rather than “easy to be entreated;”

churlish, rather than benevolent;—a dissembler and a liar, not a man of truth and faithfulness;—not meek but turbulent;—not spiritual and temperate, but addicted to the excessive indulgence of carnal appetites;—I have no hesitation in saying, that this is “a tree whose fruit withereth.” Let not such flatter themselves on the exterior of their religion. How gay soever their profession may be, if it produce not the fruits of righteousness, they will be plucked up by the roots, and their end is to be burned.

We gather from the parable, secondly, that God takes particular notice from year to year, who are fruitful, and who are not. The proprietor of the vineyard came three years seeking fruit. On other trees he found it, and this was passed by: he came to this but found none. He came the first year, and it was barren; but he said, peradventure it has sustained some injury, it will be fruitful the next year. The next year came, and the proprietor visited his vineyard; but on this tree no fruit appeared. His goodness, however, spared it again. He made his own observation on its unproductiveness, but took little notice to any other. The third year he came, and it was still unfruitful: then he said “unto the dresser of his vineyard, behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down why cumbereth it the ground?” God may take little notice to you of your unfruitfulness, except that which comes in the ordinary course of his written word, and preached gospel; and he may give no intimation to others of your real character; but be assured he observes you, and if you be unfruitful, it is recorded in his book of remembrance. Flatter not yourselves, that because you have a place in the church, you shall escape the observation of the all-scrutinizing eye, and obtain the divine approbation. The proprietor of the vineyard distinctly observed the unfruitfulness of this tree, little as he said about it, and God as distinctly observes each unfruitful professor in his vineyard, as if there was not another man upon the face of the earth.

It is observable further, thirdly, that the term of divine mercy is to us uncertain. None could have known, that another year would be added to the barren tree. The dresser of the vineyard might have concurred with the proprietor, and having testified to his own efforts to make it fruitful, might speedily have felled it to the earth. But is not the term of mercy to the barren professor still more uncertain, while we “know not what a day may bring forth?” How often have we seen persons who retired in the evening in high health, awake in the morning the subject of paralysis, and reduced

by the unexpected seizure, from minds of a powerful and commanding character, to childishness and idiocy. Others are allowed no reprieve, but in an instant, and at a crisis most unsuspected, the soul is separated from her dear companion, and plunged as from the height of some tremendous cliff, into the gulph of eternity beneath. Let none, then, presume on future days of grace. Let not the child say, "I am in the first year of the parable;" nor the youth, "I am in the second;" nor the man of business, "for me there is another year of mercy." I appeal to the sculptured monuments of mortality, to the turfs and the hillocks of our burying places, to say whether death has not left lessons of the uncertainty of life in subjects of all ages, in all circumstances, and suited to all capacities? But could I draw aside the veil that intercepts from your view the world of spirits, and thus let you look upon the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, how would it terrify your souls to see thousands, who once had a name to live, doomed to "the vengeance of eternal fire." They were unfruitful trees: some stood not half the time of others; some were cut down very early; and to every man I testify, that "the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night;" watch and pray that it come not upon you *unexpectedly*. Much mercy has been shown to every one of us; but the future term of mercy is totally uncertain. If any presume to say, that to-morrow he will begin to improve the admonition given him to day; let him remember, God may say, "thou fool, *this night*, shall thy soul be required of thee." Let every one remember,

"Procrastination is the thief of time,
Year after year it steals till all are fled;
And to the mercy of a moment, leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal state."

We gather from the parable, fourthly, that the time sooner or later will inevitably come, when sentence will be issued against every barren tree. There are not lacking in these "last days, scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." But is this a fact? Does the world now present to the eye precisely the same aspect as in all former times? Are not all things verging to a grand consummation? To look no farther, are not the subterranean fires of the earth forming such a communication to all parts, as to supply abundant physical means of a general conflagration, when the angel shall descend from heaven, and set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, and lifting his hand to heaven shall swear by him that liveth for ever and

ever, that time shall be no longer! What means the recent earthquake, in which it is stated 70,000 persons have been swallowed up? Not, however, to dwell on this consideration, it is evident, that in the course of nature, life terminates when it has attained its three score and ten, or four score years. Admitting, then, what no living man can ensure, that the barren professor will have the one more year of the parable added to him, and that he will arrive at old age, that period will soon come in the revolutions of the globe, and the stars which shone on his nativity, will point out the destined hour of his departure. "Though a man live many years, and rejoice in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many: all that cometh is vanity." Those who are far advanced in the course of life, testify, that from the age of about thirty-five, the wheels of time seem to move with increased velocity; that every year accelerates their motion; and that as man approaches to his grand climacteric, weeks pass as days formerly did, months as weeks, and the revolution of the seasons with a rapidity that compels him to moralize, and say, "our days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle." Where this rapid progress of human life is only a transition through its different stages, and chequered scenes, to a state of unmixed bliss, we may say, with our poet,

"Fly swiftly round ye wheels of time,
And bring the welcome hour"

But where it is a dreadful rush through scenes bearable, indeed, though not felicitous, into a state of horror, of anguish, of despair, "where their worm dieth not, and where their fire is not quenched," nothing on this side the boundaries of mortality is so dreadful to man, as this rapid expenditure of his few remaining moments of grace. Let the unfruitful professor know, that if his life be prolonged to the last stage of the parable, still it will soon close; that its prolongation, however, is very uncertain; and that, sooner or later, every barren tree will have the sentence pronounced, "cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?"

Is there a soul that cries, O that I had known the day of my merciful visitation, and the things that belonged to my peace, but now they are hid from my eyes? For the encouragement of such I observe from the parable, fifthly, that the circumstance of long unfruitfulness does not entirely preclude the hope of mercy. Three years this fig-tree was unfruitful; yet its cultivator prayed that one year more might be granted, as it might yet possibly be made productive. And what sentiment is expressed in the continued preservation of many an unholly professor? "let him alone this year also, and if he

bear fruit, well." One of the parables speaks of an *eleventh hour*, at which some were called into the service of the vineyard. It may be in the merciful purpose of God, yet to subdue a hard rebellious heart; yet to purify an unclean spirit; yet to display the power of a Redeemer's love, in a soul that has loved only the world; and thus to take an old sinner, or one whose crimes are of a darker hue than most, and even while the flames of hell seem ready to kindle upon him, exhibiting such a man before all heaven, to say, "is not this a brand plucked out of the burning?" The vine dresser was serious in his application, when he said, "let it alone this year also, until I shall dig about it, and dung it, and if it bear fruit, well." The proprietor also was serious, when he granted the request: and thus Jesus is sincere, while he intercedes for the poor miserable sinner. God also is serious while he withdraws thy doom, and lengthens out thy days. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." God remonstrates with you, and says, "come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." The great Redeemer, without respect of age or crime, cries, "look unto me and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." And in accents still more gracious, more soft, more condescending, saith, "come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Take with you words, and turn unto the Lord; say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips." But, further, there is another sentiment implied in the parable, which, lest the voice of mercy fail to move the heart of the impenitent sinner, I must in faithfulness proceed to notice.

Sixthly, every act of divine mercy in cultivating the barren professor, if he produce no fruit, leaves to every subsequent act of mercy less human probability of success. The tree that was barren the first year might, possibly, in virtue of the means of cultivation, resorted to, bear in the following season: but if those means failed, thenceforth they are hopeless. Other means resorted to the following year might possibly make it fruitful: but if they also failed, there remained so many means of cultivation the less to apply, and, consequently, so many less degrees of hope, that it might yet be made productive. "Let it alone this year also, until I shall dig about it, and dung it, and if it bear fruit, well; and if not, *after that thou shalt cut it down:*" all means of producing fruit will have been tried, and the case will be hopeless.

We hope in the efficacy of the preaching of the gospel, to convert the soul; but when a man has been many years under a gospel ministry, and the accents of divine mercy cease even to excite his attention, and his heart shows itself proof against all the artillery of the pulpit, we can only say, perhaps infinite wisdom has designed to work by other means. When God visits such a professor with his judgments, and the unclean spirit seems to be gone out of the man, we cherish the hope, that God has in wrath remembered mercy: but if on the removal of that judicial visitation, the unclean spirit returns with seven other spirits worse than himself, we are constrained to say, "the last state of that man will be worse than the first."

Finally: if at last there be no fruit, the tree, having been long spared, and permitted to extend its boughs and roots, will but furnish more fuel to the devouring flame. The unfruitful tree may be very luxuriant in its boughs, but the more it extends itself, being doomed to the flames, it furnishes but the more to be consumed. And let the unfruitful professor extend himself ever so widely, his fall will be but the more tremendous, and his portion more abundantly miserable. The heathen will be visited with a degree of vengeance, that would petrify our hearts could we now know it, in all its awful extent: Jews will experience judgments still more dreadful: but unfruitful christians will be cursed with plagues terrible above all others. The longer the term of mercy has been protracted, and the greater the means of fruitfulness bestowed, proportionably more dreadful will be the misery of the wretched sufferer. Conscience will torment him so much the more severely; the recollection of neglected means of grace will aggravate every wound; and the circumstance of having been not far from the kingdom of heaven, will render the pangs of perdition a thousand times more severe than they would otherwise be. Think, oh sinner, cherishing hypocrisy in thine heart, and carrying a fair show of religion to the world, think how dreadful hereafter to be exposed in the most public manner; all thy professions falsified by Christ himself; and thou poor trembling criminal, because of thy perfidious pretensions to the christian character, doomed to experience a degree of vengeance, severe beyond all parallel. Let every one, therefore, in the most solemn manner, examine himself by the word of God, as the unerring test of character. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for what a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

MORIER'S JOURNEY IN PERSIA.

The following interesting illustrations of scripture are extracted from Mr. Morier's second journey to Persia :

“ The news that a foreign *hakeem*, or doctor, was passing through the country, very soon was spread abroad, and at every halt our camp was thronged with the sick, not only of the village near to which we were encamped, but of all the surrounding villages. Many came several days' journeys to consult our doctor, and were brought to him in spite of every difficulty and inconvenience. Some came on asses, bolstered up with cushions, and supported by their relations; others on camels, whose rough pace must have been torture to any one in sickness. It may be conceived what a misfortune sickness must be in a country where there is no medical relief, nor even a wheeled conveyance, to seek relief when it is at hand. The greatest credit is due to the medical gentlemen who were attached, not only to our embassy, but to all preceding embassies, for the charity and humanity with which they relieved the wants of these poor people. They not only distributed their medicines gratis, but they as gratuitously bestowed their skill, their time, and their zeal; for which, it is grievous to say, in very few instances, did they meet with corresponding gratitude.

“ We read in scripture, that among the earliest miracles of our Saviour, which spread abroad his fame throughout Syria, was the healing of all manner of sickness: and as the state of medicine among the Jews at that time was, perhaps, not better than it is among the Persians of the present day, it is left to us to admire that wisdom which at once adopted means in every respect so well calculated to draw the public attention to his doctrine. Great multitudes followed our Saviour *from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan*; and it is to be supposed, that as the multitude approached our Saviour, impressed with a conviction of his ability to relieve their bodily sufferings, they must have had a corresponding temper of mind, favourable to the reception of the doctrine that he was about to preach. From these circumstances, we may deduce, that where it is intended to preach christianity, it would be done with greater certainty of success by men who, in the first instance, should spread their fame by healing the sick gratis. The woman afflicted by an issue of blood, for twelve years, is represented to have spent *all that she had, having suffered many things of many physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse*, till at length she had recourse to our Saviour, where she met the reward of her faith.”

Arriving at Persepolis, Mr. Morier observes;

“Here is a station of *rahdars*, or toll-gatherers, appointed to levy a toll upon *kafilehs*, or caravans of merchants; and who, in general, exercise their office with so much brutality and extortion, as to be execrated by all travellers. The collections of the toll are farmed, consequently extortion ensues; and as most of the *rahdars* receive no other emolument than what they can exact over and above the prescribed dues from the traveller, their insolence is accounted for, and a cause sufficiently powerful is given for their insolence on the one hand, and the detestation in which they are held on the other.

“*Baj-gah* means the place of tribute: it may also be rendered *the receipt of custom*; and, perhaps, it was from a place like this, that our Saviour called Matthew to follow him;* because Matthew appears, from the third verse of the tenth chapter, to have been a publican; and publicans, who in the eleventh verse of the ninth chapter, are classed with sinners, appear to have been held in the same odium as are the *rahdars* of Persia.

“It also explains why Matthew, who was seated at the receipt of custom, is afterwards called a publican: and shows that in the choice of disciples, our Saviour systematically chose them, not only from among the poorest and humblest class of men, but also from those who, from their particular situation in life, were hated by all ranks. Matthew, as a toll-gatherer, must like the *rahdars* have been a man known to all ranks of people, and detested on account of his profession. When he was seen having *power against unclean spirits*,† with power to *heal all manner of sickness and disease*, and following one like our Saviour, his life, when compared with what he formerly was, must have been a constant miracle.

“The parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, in the 18th of Luke, 10th to 13th verse, will be more clearly understood by what has been above mentioned. Our Saviour, in bringing these two characters together, appears to have chosen them as making the strongest contrast between what, in the public estimation, were the extremes of excellence and villany. According to Josephus,‡ the sect of the Pharisees was the most powerful among the Jews; and, from what has been said of the *rahdars*, it may, perhaps, be explained why the Pharisee, in praying to God, should make ‘extortioners,’ and ‘the unjust,’ almost synonymous terms with publicans; because we have seen, that from the peculiar office of the *rahdar*, he is almost an extortioner by profession.”

* Matthew ix. 9.

† Matthew x. 1.

‡ Book xiii. cha. p. 10.

When leaving the plain for the rocks of Merdasht, our traveller observes;

"I remarked, that our old guide, every here and there, placed a stone on a conspicuous bit of rock, or two stones one upon the other, at the same time uttering some words, which I learnt were a prayer for our safe return. This explained to me what I had frequently seen before in the east, and particularly on a high road leading to a great town, whence the town is first seen, and where the eastern traveller sets up his stone, accompanied by a devout exclamation, as it were in token of his safe arrival. The action of our guide to illustrate the vow which Jacob made when he travelled for the Padan-aram, in token of which, he placed a stone and set it up for a pillar.* In seeing a stone on the road placed in this position, or one stone upon another, it implies, that some traveller has there made a vow, or a thanksgiving. Nothing is so natural in a journey over a dreary country, as for a solitary traveller to set himself down fatigued, and to make the vow that Jacob did. *'If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I reach my father's house in peace,'* &c. then will I give so much charity; or again, that on first seeing the place which he has so long toiled to reach, the traveller should sit down and make a thanksgiving; in both cases setting up a stone as a memorial."

[Congregational Magazine.

REVIEW.

[We present to our readers the following extract from the Eclectic Review; a very able work published in England. It may be well to inform some of our readers, that the celebrated David Hume wrote an essay, the object of which was to prove that no testimony could render the performance of miracles credible. The author of the pamphlet reviewed below, takes up Hume's arguments, and engages to show that according to them, the extraordinary exploits and even the very existence of Napoleon Bonaparte are extremely doubtful, not to say incredible. In other words that the famous argument of Hume leads to an absurdity. We think that this article will be amusing, and we hope instructive to many of our readers; and therefore, we give it to them.]

* Genes. xxviii. 18—22.

Historic Doubts relative to Napoleon Bonaparte. 8vo. pp. 48.
Oxford, 1819.

This is a well managed and legitimate burlesque of Hume's scepticism. After advert ing to the extraordinary tales current among us relative to this Napoleon Bonaparte, and to the wide discrepancies of opinion, of which his character and actions are the subjects, the writer remarks:

“In the midst of these controversies the preliminary question, concerning the *existence* of this extraordinary personage, seems never to have occurred to any one as a matter of doubt; and to shew even the smallest hesitation in admitting it, would probably be regarded as an excess of scepticism, on the ground that this point has always been taken for granted by the disputants on all sides, being indeed implied by the very nature of their disputes. But is it in fact found that *undisputed* points are always such as have been the most carefully examined as to the evidence on which they rest? that facts or principles which are taken for granted, without controversy, as the common basis of opposite opinions, are always themselves established on sufficient grounds? On the contrary, is not any such fundamental point, from the very circumstance of its being taken for granted at once, and the attention drawn off to some other question, likely to be admitted on insufficient evidence, and the flaws in that evidence overlooked? Experience will teach us that such instances often occur: witness the well known anecdote of the Royal Society; to whom King Charles II. proposed as question, whence it is that a vessel of water receives no addition of weight from a live fish being put into it, though it does if the fish be dead. Various solutions of great ingenuity were proposed, discussed, objected to, and defended; nor was it till they had been long bewildered in the enquiry that it occurred to them to *try the experiment*, by which they at once ascertained, that the phenomenon which they were striving to account for—which was the acknowledged basis and substratum, as it were, of their debates—had no existence but in the invention of the very witty monarch.” pp. 5, 6.

The readiness with which men believe, (as Hume has remarked,) on very slight evidence, any story that pleases their imagination by its admirable and marvellous character, is utterly unworthy of a philosophical mind, which should rather suspend its judgment the more, in proportion to the strangeness of the account, and yield to none but the most decisive and unimpeachable proofs.

“Let it then be allowed us, as is surely reasonable, just to enquire, with respect to the extraordinary story I have been

speaking of, on what evidence we believe it. We shall be told that it is *notorious*; i. e. in plain English, it is very much *talked about*: but as the generality of those who talk about Buonaparte do not even pretend to speak from *their own authority*, but merely to repeat what they have casually heard, we cannot reckon them as in any degree witnesses, but must allow ninety-nine hundredths of what we are told to be mere hear-say, which would not be at all the more worthy of credit if even it were repeated by ten times as many more. As for those who profess to have *personally known* Napoleon Buonaparte, and to have *themselves witnessed* his transactions, I write not for them: if any such there be, who are inwardly conscious of the truth of all they relate, I have nothing to say to them, but to beg that they will be tolerant and charitable towards their neighbours, who have not the same means of ascertaining the truth, and who may well be excused for remaining doubtful about such extraordinary events, till most unanswerable proofs shall be adduced." pp. 8, 9.

It is recommended, however, that we trace up this hear-say evidence, as far as we are able, towards its source.

"Most persons would refer to the *newspapers* as the authority from which their knowledge on the subject was derived; so that, generally speaking, we may say, it is on the testimony of the newspapers that men believe in the existence and exploits of Napoleon Buonaparte." p. 9.

But the authority of this 'newspaper evidence, may be questioned; first, as to the means the editors have possessed of gaining correct information; secondly, as to the interest they may have in concealing truth, or propagating falsehood; and, thirdly, as to the agreement of their testimony.

"First, what means have the editors of newspapers for gaining correct information? We know not, except from their own statements: besides, what is copied from other journals, foreign or British, (which is usually more than three-fourths of the news published,) they profess to refer to the authority of certain private correspondents abroad: who these correspondents are, what means *they* have of obtaining information, or whether they exist at all, we have no way of ascertaining: we find ourselves in the condition of the Hindoos, who are told by their priests, that the earth stands on an elephant, and the elephant on a tortoise, but are left to find out for themselves what the tortoise stands on, or whether it stands on any thing at all." pp. 11, 12.

The interest which the proprietors of newspapers have in the circulation of these marvellous narrations, is too obvious not to awaken suspicion.

"It may be argued, however, that there are several adverse political parties of which the various public prints are respectively the organs, and who would not fail to expose each other's fabrications: doubtless they would, if they could do so without at the same time exposing *their own*; but identity of interests may induce a community of operations up to a certain point; and let it be observed, that the object of contention between these rival parties is, *who* shall have the administration of public affairs, the controul of public expenditures, and the disposal of places; the question, I say, is, not whether the people shall be governed or not, but *by which party* they shall be governed;—not whether the taxes shall be paid or not, but *who* shall receive them. Now it must be admitted, that Buonaparte is a political bugbear, most convenient to any administration: "If you do not adopt our measures and reject those of our opponents, Buonaparte will be sure to prevail over you; if you do not submit to the government, at least under *our* administration, this formidable enemy will take advantage of your insubordination to conquer and enslave you: pay your taxes cheerfully, or the tremendous Buonaparte will take all from you." Buonaparte, in short, was the burden of every song, his redoubted name was the charm which always succeeded in unloosing the purse-strings of the nation. And let us not be too sure, safe as we now think ourselves, that some occasion may not occur for again producing on the stage so useful a personage: it is not merely to naughty children in the nursery that the threat of being "given to Buonaparte" has proved effectual. It is surely probable therefore, that, with an object substantially the same, all parties may have availed themselves of one common instrument. It is not necessary to suppose that for this purpose they secretly entered into a formal agreement; though, by the way, there are reports afloat, that the editors of the *Courier* and *Morning Chronicle* hold amicable consultations as to the conduct of their public warfare: I will not take upon me to say that this is incredible; but at any rate it is not necessary for the establishment of the probability I contend for. Neither again would I imply that *all* newspaper editors are utterers of forged stories "knowing them to be forged;" most likely the great majority of them publish what they find in other papers with the same simplicity that their readers peruse it; and therefore, it must be observed, are not at all more proper than their readers to be cited as authorities." pp. 12—15.

The author goes on to detect and expose the multiplied inconsistencies which might be expected to have place in an extensive and complicated forgery.

“What then are we to believe? if we are disposed to credit all that is told us, we must believe in the existence not only of one, but of two or three Buonapartes; if we admit nothing but what is well authenticated, we shall be compelled to doubt of the existence of any.

“It appears then, that those on whose testimony the existence and actions of Buonaparte are generally believed, fail in all the most essential points on which the credibility of witnesses depends: first, we have no assurance that they have access to correct information; secondly, they have an apparent interest in propagating falsehood; and, thirdly, they palpably contradict each other in the most important points.” pp. 18, 19.

But what shall we say to the testimony of those many respectable persons who went to Plymouth on purpose, and saw Bonaparte with their own eyes? must they not trust their senses?

“I would not disparage either the eye-sight or the veracity of these gentlemen. I am ready to allow that they went to Plymouth for the purpose of seeing Buonaparte; nay more, that they actually rowed out into the harbour in a boat, and came along side of a man-of-war, on whose deck they saw a man in a cocked hat, who, *they were told*, was Buonaparte; this is the utmost point to which their testimony goes; how they ascertained that this man in the cocked hat had gone through all the marvellous and romantic adventures with which we have so long been amused, we are not told: did they perceive in his physiognomy his true name and authentic history? Truly this evidence is such as country people give one for a story of apparitions; if you discover any signs of incredulity, they triumphantly shew the very house which the ghost haunted, the identical dark corner where it used to vanish, and perhaps even the tomb-stone of the person whose death it foretold. Jack Cade’s nobility was supported by the same irresistible kind of evidence; having asserted that the eldest son of Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, was stolen by a beggar-woman, “became a bricklayer when he came to age,” and was the father of the supposed Jack Cade: one of his companions confirms the story, by saying. “Sir, he made a chimney in my father’s house, and the bricks are alive to this day to testify it; therefore deny it not.” pp. 22, 23.

Much of the same kind is the testimony of those who are ready to produce the scars they received in fighting against this terrible Bonaparte. These persons fought, no doubt; but they *know* little or nothing more than their countrymen at home, concerning the person and history of their enemy.

“ Let those then who pretend to philosophical freedom of enquiry,—who scorn to rest their opinions on popular belief, and to shelter themselves under the example of the unthinking multitude, consider carefully, each one for himself, what is the evidence proposed to himself in particular, for the existence of such a person as Napoleon Buonaparte; (I do not mean whether there ever was a person bearing that *name*, for that is a question of no consequence, but whether any such person ever performed all the wonderful things attributed to him;) let him then weigh well the objections to that evidence, (of which I have given but a hasty and imperfect sketch,) and if he then finds it amount to any thing *more* than a probability, I have only to congratulate him on his easy faith.”
p. 24.

But this story, resting as we have seen, upon very exceptionable evidence, is in itself highly incredible. It is *improbable*—*marvellous*—*prodigious*—*unprecedented*; and, to use the term in Hume’s sense, *miraculous*. *It is contrary to our personal experience.* And every man’s personal experience (if we would maintain a philosophical scepticism) is, to him, the only ground and rule of reasonable belief.

The wise, says Hume, lend a very academic faith to every report which favours the passion of the reporter, whether it magnifies his country, his family, or himself: but who can fail to observe the *nationality* of this marvelous tale?

“ Buonaparte prevailed over all the hostile states in turn, *except England*; in the zenith of his power, his fleets were swept from the sea, *by England*; his troops always defeat an equal, and frequently even a superior number of those of any other nation, *except the English*, and with them it is just the reverse; twice, and twice only, he is personally engaged against an *English commander*, and both times he is totally defeated, at Acre, and at Waterloo; and, to crown all, *England* finally crushes this tremendous power, which has so long kept the continent in subjection or in alarm, and to the *English* he surrenders himself prisoner! Thoroughly national, to be sure! It *may* be all very true; but I would only ask, if a story *had* been fabricated for the express purpose of amusing the English nation, could it have been contrived more ingeniously?” pp. 39—40.

The author having thus exposed the invalidity of the ground upon which the popular belief is rested, modestly inquires if it be too much to demand of the wary academic, a suspension of judgment as to the ‘ life and adventures of Napoleon Bonaparte.’

“ I do not pretend to decide positively that there is not, nor ever was any such person, but merely to propose it as a

doubtful point; and one the more deserving of careful investigation from the very circumstance of its having hitherto been admitted without inquiry."

He who detects a fiction, is not bound to supply the vacuity he has produced in our creed by positive and unimpeachable truth. In the present instance many suppositions might plausibly be hazarded.

"Is it not just possible, that during the rage for words of Greek derivation, the title of "Napoleon" (Ναπολεων,) which signifies "Lion of the forest," may have been conferred by the popular voice on more than one favourite general, distinguished for irresistible valour? Is it not also possible that "BUONA PARTE" may have been originally a sort of cant term applied to the "good (i. e. the bravest or most patriotic) part" of the French army, collectively, and have been afterwards mistaken for the proper name of an individual? I do not profess to support this conjecture; but it is certain that such mistakes may and do occur. Some critics have supposed that the Athenians imagined ANASTASIS ("Resurrection") to be a new goddess, in whose cause Paul was preaching. Would it have been thought any thing incredible if we had been told that the ancient Persians, who had no idea of any but a monarchical government, had supposed Aristocratia to be a queen of Sparta? But we need not confine ourselves to hypothetical cases; it is positively stated that the Hindoos at this day believe "the honourable East India Company" to be a venerable old lady of high dignity residing in this country." pp. 44, 45.

In concluding, the writer invites those who will listen to no testimony that runs counter to experience, and who will believe nothing but that of which it is strictly impossible to doubt, to be consistent, and shew themselves as ready to detect the cheats and despise the fables of politicians, as of priests.

"But if they are still wedded to the popular belief in this point, let them be consistent enough to admit the same evidence in *other* cases, which they yield to in *this*. If after all that has been said, they cannot bring themselves to doubt of the existence of Napoleon Buonaparte, they must at least acknowledge that they do not apply to that question, the same plan of reasoning which they have made use of in others; and they are consequently bound in reason and in honesty to renounce it altogether." pp. 47, 48.

The ingenious author of this pamphlet must be aware, that the case of Napoleon Bonaparte does not strictly meet the main sophism of Hume's *Essay on Miracles*; he does, however,

very fairly turn the laugh against the practical absurdities of the hyper-scepticism which is displayed in the second part of that Essay: and we think he has very well caught the oblique, plausible insidiousness of Hume's manner. But if he would pretend to stand upon the ground of rigid reasoning, the disciple of Hume would say, that the supposed scepticism relative to Bonaparte, falls very plainly under exception which that writer himself makes for those cases in which the greatest miracle would be on the side of the alleged fabrication. The successful promulgation of such a history, if unreal, so near to us in time and place, would obviously be more extraordinary than any of the facts it contains. The same thing, indeed, may be said of those suppositions which form the alternative, if the histories of the New Testament are affirmed to be forgeries. But to show this, it is previously requisite to expose the sophism of Hume's first position, which in substance is this, that every man's experience of the uniformity of nature furnishes him with a *proof* against miracles, which the highest evidence of testimony can at most only balance, leaving the mind in suspense between opposing proof; so that a reported miracle, though it may perplex the judgment, can never be the ground of reasonable belief. This doctrine has been abundantly refuted in different ways. It would be sufficient briefly to observe the distinction which Hume labours to hide from his reader, between what is simply *extraordinary*—that is, not conformed to our personal experience, and what is strictly *incredible*, or contradictory to our *actual knowledge*. That water should, during a part of the year, be in a solid state, is not according to the experience of him who has always inhabited the islands of the torrid zone: but unless he could profess to be acquainted with the whole system of nature, in refusing his belief to credible testimony which affirms the fact, the sable sceptic, on the strength of his personal ignorance, contradicts his own experience of human nature, which directs him to confide in testimony under certain circumstances. Hume trespasses beyond the ordinary bounds of his argumentative caution, when he affirms that 'the Indian prince who refused to believe the first relations concerning the effects of frost, reasoned justly.' Such an instance can hardly fail to suggest to the reader the unsoundness of the sceptical argument, and its internal inconsistency. Would not this Indian prince have done better, to reflect that the effect of cold upon water was merely *beyond* his experience, while the credibility of testimony was a subject *within* his experience?

It is in the very nature of a miracle, that it should be an occurrence not according to common experience; but it cannot

be called incredible, (that is, contradictory to our knowledge,) unless we had the means of *knowing* that it is incompatible with the character or purposes of the Author of nature, thus specially to interpose in diverting the order of nature for a moral purpose. To set out with the affirmation that a miracle is incredible, because it is not according to *uniform* experience, is a mere *petitio principii*; and it is enough, simply to deny the assumption. Here, we say, is credible testimony that miracles have not been contrary to *all* experience.

In respect to their credibility, (supposing they imply no plain contradiction,) a miracle, and any natural fact which has never fallen under our personal observation, stand precisely on the same ground. Unless, in the one case, we were perfectly acquainted with the system of nature, or, in the other, with the character and designs of the Divine Being, we can have absolutely nothing *positive* to counterbalance the evidence of testimony which supports the one or the other allegation: our sole concernment is with the *credibility of the testimony*. The more or less extraordinary nature of the fact in question, (provided it does not contradict our actual knowledge,) has no place whatever in measuring the *degree* of our conviction, because this *extraordinariness* is a mere variable negation, derived from every man's *ignorance*, and directly proportionate to it. The credible affirmation of an extraordinary natural fact, or of a miracle, makes an intrusion, so to speak, not upon our previous knowledge, but upon our present ignorance; while it appeals, as the ground of our assent, not to our ignorance, but to our knowledge, namely, to our knowledge of that human nature, and of those laws of the moral world, which are the objects of our personal experience, the matters of our positive knowledge, and on which is founded the power of testimony to command belief.

REVIEW.

PETER'S LETTERS TO HIS KINSMEN.

(Continued from page 185.)

The two next letters, addressed to Lady Johnes, contain some lively descriptions of Edinburg manners, some just observations respecting the bad effects of indulging in a constant

round of amusements, and some very absurd things. The author forgets that he is writing to a lady, and quotes Greek. He forgets too the decorum of a gentleman, and descants on matters of which he had no business to say a word. His ridicule of waltzing, however, may pass for an expiation of his other offences. We do not know whether his countrymen and countrywomen among us, will forgive him for representing the Scotch, passionately fond as they are of dancing, as rather awkward dancers even in Edinburg. Perhaps this may be peremptorily denied by some. We know nothing of these matters.—But certainly Dr. Peter Morris affirms the fact; and we are not surprised that it should be so, among the disciples of John Knox, and Andrew Melville. There is a perfect incongruity in this thing. How should it be expected that *elegant Parisian dancing*, that *luscious German Waltzing* should be found among a race of Presbyterians? Really we should expect them to be awkward, in all such matters.

We pass by the *high houses*, and the cadies of Edinburg; and are glad to fall in with such men as Dr. Brewster and professor Jameison. Dr. B. is the inventor of that amusing toy, the Kaleidoscope. He has made many important discoveries concerning light. But perhaps is most advantageously known as the conductor of the *Edinburg Encyclopedia*; decidedly, as we think, the best work of the kind that has ever appeared.*

Dr. B. is a man of deep scientific research; and yet, as Dr. Morris informs us, displays a vast deal of information respecting the lighter kinds of literature. This eminently qualifies him as an editor of such a work as he has undertaken. To this we add, that he is a man so influenced by religion, that the pious reader will find nothing in the work to offend his feelings; the man who doubts will find much to relieve his difficulties; and the sceptic, much to show the unreasonableness of his incredulity. There is nothing of the insidious infidelity of the *French Encyclopedia*; nor of the crude and coarse *Materialism* and *Socinianism* of Dr. Rees.

Professor Jameison is, confessedly, one of the greatest mineralogists in Europe. He has published a system of *Mineralogy*, which ought to be generally known in this country. He delivers lectures in the University of Edinburg, both in summer and winter. His course is divided into five

* An edition of this work is going on in Philadelphia. We are sorry to learn that it goes on heavily. Certainly if any book of this sort ever deserved encouragement, this does. It is far superior to the interminable work of Dr. Rees.

great branches, Meteorology, Hydrography, Mineralogy, the Philosophy of Botany, and Zoology. Dr. Morris says, however, that the science of Natural History has not flourished much in Scotland. This was attributed, chiefly to the engrossing business of *the law*. We have introduced this subject principally, for the sake of remarking on the very wide prevalence of this evil among our countrymen. Every profession, here, engrosses those who engage in it. Not that the peculiar studies of any profession are pursued with that zeal, that ambition of excellence, which nothing can control. We are too indolent for that. But in general professional men either limit their attention exclusively to their own profession, or, if they go beyond it, they enter the barren field of local politics. The lawyer, as far as he is any thing, is a mere lawyer.—The physician, a mere doctor.—The preacher, a mere theologian. We are, in general, too well satisfied with scanty attainments in these several professions. Hence, a great want of comprehension, of enlarged and liberal views. Hence too the little encouragement given to learning; and the scorn with which many are accustomed to treat all attempts to promote general literature among us. In this state of things learning can never prosper.

Dr. Morris next gives an amusing caricature of a debating society, and a great deal of half pleasant, half disgusting nonsense about Craniology and Cranioscopy; and then turns to the Edinburg *blue stockings*. On this subject, we will allow Dr. Peter Morris to speak for himself. He is giving an account of a party, to which he had accepted an invitation; and where, it seems, he met with Mr. Jeffrey, professor Lesslie, and several of the literary characters of Edinburg, with the addition of a number of *Bas-bleus*. The conversation was interrupted for a time by what Dr. Morris thought a very miserable musical performance, and most distressing compliments thundered out upon the conclusion.

“ After this blessed consummation had restored to us the free use of our limbs and tongues, (I say free—for in spite of nods, and whispers of rebuke, administered by some of the Dowagers, our silence had never been much more complete than the music merited,) I joined a small party, which had gradually clustered around Mr. J—, and soon found that the redoubtable critic had been so unfortunate as to fall into an ambush laid to entrap him by a skilful party of blue-stockings *tirailleures*. There he was pinioned up against the wall, and listening, with a greater expression of misery than I should have supposed to be compatible with his Pococurante disposition, to the hints of one, the remarks of another, the suggestion of a third, the rebuke of a fourth, the dissertation of a fifth, and last, not least, in this cruel catalogue of inflictions, to the questions of a sixth. “ Well now, Mr. Jeffrey, don’t you agree with me, in being decidedly of opinion, that Mr. Scott is the true author of the Tales of my Landlord? O Lord!—they’re so like Mr. S—, some of the stories—one could almost believe one heard him telling them. Could not you do the same, Mr. J—?”—The shrug of ineffable derision which Mr. J— vainly endeavoured to keep down, in making some

inaudible reply of two syllables to this, did not a whit dismay another, who forthwith began to ply him with query upon query, about the conduct of Lord Biron, in deserting his wife—and whether or not, he (Mr. J——) considered it likely, that Lord B—— had had himself, (Lord B——,) in his eye, in drawing the character of the Corsair—"and oh, now, Mr. J——, don't you think Gulnare so romantic a name? I wish I had been christened Gulnare. Can people change their names, Mr. J——, without an estate?"—"Why, yes, ma'am," replied the critic—after a most malicious pause, "by being married."—* * * * "Mr. J——," exclaimed a fierce-looking damsel with a mop head—"I insist upon hearing if you have read Peter Bell—will you ever be convinced? Shall I ever be able to persuade you? Can you deny the beauty of the white sapling—'as white as cream?' Can you be blind to the pathetic incident of the poor ass kneeling under the blows of the cruel, hard-hearted, odious Peter? Can you be blind to the charm of the boat?"

"Why—oh—the laker has made a good deal of his tub—*'Twin sister to the Crescent-Moon.'*"

"Ah! naughty man, you are incorrigible—I'll go speak to Mr. Wilson."

I looked round, and saw Mr. W——n. He had a little book of fishing-flies in his hand, and was loudly and sonorously explaining the beauty of a bit of grizzled hackle on the wings of one of them to Mr. M——. My venerable friend seemed to be listening with the deepest interest to what he said, but the young lady broke in upon their conversation with the utmost intrepidity. I could just hear enough of what passed, to be satisfied, that the brother poet made as light of the matter as the adverse critic. I suspect, that from the cruelty of Peter Bell's bludgeon, she made a transition to the cruelty of killing poor innocent trouts; but before that subject had time to be adequately discussed, supper was announced, and I descended close behind Mr. J——, who had a lady upon each arm, one all the way down discussing the Bank Restriction Bill, and the other displaying equal eloquence in praise of "that delightful—that luminous article in the last number upon the Corn Laws."

I was never a lover of Blue-Stockings either at home or abroad; but of all that I have met with, I think the French are the most tolerable, and the Scotch the most tormenting. In France, the genuine power and authority which the women exert, and have long exerted, in swaying the course of public opinion in regard to a vast variety of subjects, are sufficient, were there nothing more, to make one excuse a great deal of their petulance and presumption. And then there is a light graceful ease about the manner of their trespasses, which would carry off the indignation of a Diogeness himself. How is it possible to feel any serious displeasure against the pretty creature that come tripping up to you with a fan in her hand, and seems quite indifferent whether you ask her to dance a quadrille with you, or sit down by her side, and discuss the merits of the last *roman*? The truth is, however, that the French ladies in general talk about things they do understand something about—or at least, which it is easy and natural to imagine, may be interesting to their feelings. But what say you to the Scottish Blue-Stockings, whose favourite topics are the Resumption of Cash-payments, the great question of Borough Reform, and Corn-Bill? They are certainly the very *flour* of their sex. "Ohe! jam satis est"—I would not be badgered as Mr. J—— is for a moiety of his reputation.

I was at another party of somewhat the same kind last night, where, however, I had the satisfaction of seeing several more characters of some note, and, therefore, I repented not my going. Among others, I was introduced to Mrs. Grant of L——n, the author of the Letters from the Mountains, and other well-known works. Mrs. G—— is really a woman of great talents and acquirements, and might, without offence to any one, talk upon any subject she pleases. But I assure you, any person that hopes to meet with a Blue-Stocking, in the common sense of the term, in this lady, will

feel sadly disappointed. She is as plain, modest, and unassuming, as she could have been, had she never stepped from the village, whose name she has rendered so celebrated. Instead of entering on any long common-place discussions, either about politics, or political economy, or any other of the hackneyed subjects of tea-table talk in Edinburgh, Mrs. G—— had the good sense to perceive, that a stranger, such as I was, came not to hear disquisitions, but to gather useful information; and she therefore directed her conversation entirely to the subject which she herself best understands—which, in all probability, she understands better than almost any one else—and which was precisely one of the subjects, in regard to which I felt the greatest inclination to hear a sensible person speak—namely, the Highlands. She related, in a very simple, but very graphic manner, a variety of little anecdotes and traits of character, with my recollections of which I shall always have a pleasure in connecting my recollections of herself. The sound and rational enjoyment I derived from my conversation with this excellent person, would, indeed, atone for much more than all the Blue-Stocking sisterhood have ever been able to inflict upon my patience."

pa. 171—172—173—174.

We must defer the conclusion of this article until our next number. In the mean time, we hope that they whom it may concern, will make a proper use of this extract. They may be assured that there is no malice in the quotation, whatever there might have been in the original writing.

THE BIBLE; AN AFFECTING FACT.

From the London Evang. Magazine. Jan. 1820.

Mr. Editor.—Should the following peculiarly interesting and well authenticated little fact, meet with your approbation and appear to be calculated for usefulness to your numerous readers, you will much oblige me, and many others in this neighbourhood, by permitting it to be inserted in your excellent publication. The circumstance itself occurred in the town of Warrington; was related there, at a Bible Meeting, by a gentleman of respectability and veracity, and connected with the Society; and has since been repeated by myself in a neighbouring town on a similar occasion. The more inquiry I make, the more am I satisfied of the truth of the account.

“About three weeks ago, two little boys, decently clothed—the eldest appearing about thirteen, and the youngest eleven, called at the lodging house for vagrants in this town, for a night’s lodging: the keeper of the house (very properly) took them to the vagrant office to be examined; and, if proper objects, to be relieved. The account they gave of

themselves was extremely affecting; and no doubt was entertained of its truth. It appeared, that but a few weeks had elapsed since these poor little wanderers had resided with their parents in London. The typhus fever, however, in one day carried off both father and mother, leaving them orphans in a wide world, without a home and without friends! Immediately after the last mournful tribute had been paid to the memory, having an uncle in Liverpool—poor and destitute as they were, they resolved to go and throw themselves upon his protection. Tired therefore and faint, they arrived in this town on their way.—Two bundles contained their little all. In the youngest boy's was found, neatly covered, and carefully preserved, *a Bible*.—The keeper of the lodging house, addressing the little boy, said, “You have neither money nor meat, will you sell me this Bible: I will give you five shillings for it.” “No!” exclaimed he, (the tears rolling down his youthful cheeks,) “I'll starve first.” He then said, “there are plenty of books to be bought beside this—Why do you love the Bible so much? He replied ‘No book has stood my friend so much as my Bible.’ ‘Why, what has your Bible done for you?’ said he. He answered, “when I was a little boy of seven years of age, I became a sunday scholar, in London; through the kind attention of my master, I soon learnt to read the Bible:—this Bible, young as I was, shewed me that I was a sinner, and a great one too; it also pointed me to a Saviour: and I thank God that I have found mercy at the hands of Christ, and am not ashamed to confess him before the world.” To try him still further, six shillings was then offered him for his Bible. “No,” said he, “for it has been my support all the way from London; hungry and weary, often have I sat down by the way side and read my Bible, and have found refreshment from it.” Thus did he experience the consolations of the Psalmist, when he said, “In the multitude of sorrows that I had in my heart, thy comforts have refreshed my soul.” He was then asked, “What will you do, when you get to Liverpool, should your uncle refuse to take you in?” His reply may excite a blush in many established Christians, “My Bible tells me,” said he, “when my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.” The man could go no further, tears choaked his utterance, and they both wept together. They had, in their pockets, tickets as rewards for their good conduct, from the school to which they belonged, and thankfulness and humility were visible in their deportment. At night, these two little orphans, bending their knees by the side of their bed, committed themselves to the

care of their Heavenly Father—to him, whose ears are ever open to the calls of the destitute; and to him who has said, “Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.”—The next morning these refreshed little wanderers arose early, addressed themselves to their journey, and set out for the town of Liverpool; and may he who hears the raven’s cry, hear and answer their petitions, guide them through time and bless them in eternity.

Now, Mr. Editor this little simple fact, appears to me to address itself to the *hearts* of three different classes in society; and I must claim your indulgence while I mention what I think it says to each. To the *rich* it seems to say, “Withhold not from the poor that *blessed book*, the *Bible*, which is so peculiarly calculated to afford them comfort and consolation in the trying hour of affliction and woe!” To the *poor* it seems to say, “Learn to count those persons your greatest enemies, who wish in the present day, so *maliciously* and so *wickedly* to weaken your faith in the *Bible*, and in its Divine Author! And, to the members of *Bible* and *Sunday School* Societies, it seems to say, ‘Be not weary in well doing, for, in due season you shall reap, if you faint not.’

Should it be enquired, what became of the little boys? It is much to be lamented, that no farther trace could be obtained of them, as the address of the uncle was not taken. J. H.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

DOMESTIC.

The following account of a Sunday School in the upper end of Essex County, Virginia, has been prepared and addressed to the Rev. Mr. Rice, at the suggestion of a highly respectable Clergyman of his Church.

This School was opened on the last Sunday but one, in June 1819. Those who had interested themselves in its establishment were far from being confident of success; the most sanguine amongst them having never extended their calculations in

regard to the probable number of Scholars who might be induced to attend it, beyond twenty-five or thirty. The neighbourhood was not considered populous, and the scheme itself was untried in this section of Country, upon any regular and extensive plan. The School commenced, however, with sixteen, and has gone on to increase and to flourish, until it has reached the most unexpected aggregate of one hundred & fifty-eight,—ten only, having left it,

in consequence of removing to a distance, since its institution. For many successive Sundays the accession of Scholars was from four to seventeen; and so delighted were the children themselves with attending, that very few ever absented themselves, until winter. The scene was entirely new:—many of the neighbours had scarcely ever heard of a Sunday School before;—and none, ever among those who attempted to teach, had ever seen one in operation. Such a novelty, exhibited under such circumstances, excited, as you may well imagine, a degree of interest in the neighbourhood, which it is easier to conceive than to describe. In fact, for several succeeding months the spectacle displayed by the School could not be viewed without emotion by any, but those who had neither human sympathy, nor human benevolence about them. The idea of so many nearly helpless and destitute children being placed in a situation to be taught their various duties in life, and to be furnished under the blessing of a beneficent Providence with motives to practice them, was perpetually recurring to the imagination; and the School in this way became not less beneficial to the Teachers themselves and to the visitors,—of whom there were almost always considerable numbers,—than to those who were the particular subjects of instruction. There are very few human beings, I should hope, so obdurate,—so hardened against benevolent impression, as not to feel both their minds and hearts elevated and improved by the mere contemplation of scenes calculated to inspire them. How much more vivid and efficacious then, may we reasonably conclude that these impressions will be, on all those who are actually engaged in such occupations as perpetually awaken and keep alive in the agents themselves, the desire to do good?

After a most prosperous summer, the neighbours were so highly gratified with the experiment, that they voluntarily proposed to build a house for the accommodation of the School, during the fall and winter. This was accordingly done without

fee or reward, other than that which never fails to accompany the performance of a praise-worthy action. At a time agreed upon, a considerable number of persons assembled, and worked with such a degree of zeal and alacrity, as none of the ordinary motives to labour ever inspire, that in a short time they erected a very comfortable house of logs and clap-boards, sufficiently convenient to hold two hundred persons. In this building the School has been conducted ever since, without intermission; except when the weather was so bad, that the children could not assemble; which has very seldom happened. Not a solitary instance of any such disorderly conduct in school, as required the reprehension of the Superintendants has yet occurred.— Almost all those Scholars who began with their alphabet, have now learned to read, which many of them accomplished in eight or ten Sundays:—and it may be said with truth, that great diligence and propriety of behaviour characterise a considerable majority of the scholars. At first, no grown persons entered, but at length a few having had boldness enough to conquer that false shame which unfortunately keeps so many from doing what they believe right; several followed their laudable example, until the number increased to about thirty.

In this establishment an attempt has been made to dispense with two things which for ages appear generally, to have been thought essential to the prosperity of Schools:—these are the principle of emulation, as made to operate among the Scholars against each other,—and the fear of their instructors. The first, it was believed, does more harm than good, in exciting some of the worst passions of our nature,—at the head of which stands envy;—whilst the last was considered a much less operative motive, as well as less improving to the character and disposition, than the hope of commendation. So far, the most satisfactory success has attended the experiment. There is emulation still, but instead of being so directed as to produce invidious rivalry,—instead of having for its

aim and gratification the overcoming and putting to shame a fellow being, it has for its object a reward attainable by all, because it is bestowed on diligence and good conduct alone. This reward consists in the public presentation by the superintendent, at the end of the year, of a Bible, or some other good book, without regard to those distinctions of superior capacity which Deity alone can confer. The desire to excel each other in the highest exertions of intellect, is certainly a most powerful, and in many cases, very beneficial principle; but it is much to be apprehended, that in a majority of instances it improves the understanding at the expense of the heart.

In regard to the methods of instruction, about which you may probably desire some information, I will now state them as briefly as I can. The School, as usual, is divided into classes, with separate teachers to each, and two superintendents for the whole. These classes recite from three to five lessons each Sunday;—but have no “cutting down” as it is called. They are kept in school about four hours,—always in the presence of some of their teachers, and of one, or both of the superintendents. The books used are, the Testament, the Episcopal and Watts catechisms, his “Divine Songs”—“Hymns for infant minds,”—and a set of Books printed in New-York for the use of Schools, containing the Alphabet, the Primer, Expositor, Spelling-Book, and Readers No. 1, & No. 2. All these have been purchased by voluntary subscription, except several dozen Testaments presented by the Bible Society of Fredericksburg. The books are distributed indiscriminately among the scholars, as they want them, who take them as their own property, to their respective homes, that they may be learning something at every leisure time during the week. They are required to commit to memory such portions of the Testament, Catechisms, “Watts’s Divine Songs,” and “Hymns for infant minds,” as their several capacities & opportunities enable them to com-

mit; and on every Sunday they receive when they merit it, one white ticket each of paste-board—marked with the words “For attendance and good behaviour.” Six of these entitle the holder upon delivery, to one red ticket, on which is printed some moral, or religious precept from Scripture. These last may be purchased in Philadelphia or New-York, for about ten or twelve cents a hundred, and six of them procure at the end of the year for those who obtain them, one Bible, or other good book containing an approbatory certificate from the Superintendent. There are no punishments, except withholding the white tickets, private admonition by the Superintendent, and dismission in cases of continued misconduct. The distribution of these apparently trivial rewards produces a much greater effect, especially on the small children, than any person probably, who had not witnessed it, could believe. How long this interest will continue to be excited by such means, there is not sufficient experience to decide:—the tickets still appear to be sought by most of the Scholars with unabated eagerness.

The School opens by one of the superintendents or teachers reading a chapter from the Bible or Testament, and delivering a short prayer; the classes then go through their different lessons, during which the Superintendents examine the copies written by the Scholars at home, in the course of the previous week;—after which the two Catechism classes read together in the Testament. One of the Superintendents concludes the exercises of the day by reading to the whole school, and to visitors, some moral, religious, and entertaining tract, tale, story, or essay, of which the works of Miss Hannah Moore, who has written many things, expressly for Sunday Schools, furnish by far the best, I believe, that can be procured. This last practice has been much approved, and has often attracted considerable numbers of visitors, who have always expressed the highest gratification at these readings. To the

foregoing particulars should be added the fact, that Christians of all denominations are here invited to join as instructors. No preference is given to particular sects; no religious doctrines are taught but such as all christians approve; but the parents, guardians, or friends of the small children choose for them, and the grown scholars for themselves, such Catechisms as they may severally prefer.

The above minutiae relative to the management of the School, altho' containing nothing new probably either to you sir, or to many of your readers, may possibly be useful to those who may be desirous to establish Sunday-Schools, but may not have had opportunities of learning any such particulars about them, as would suffice for their immediate organization. For the information of such persons—should there be any, these particulars are given; and they are offered with the sincere, earnest and anxious wish, that some good may result from the narrative. If only two or three individuals by the reading of this account, should be induced determinately to say,—as others have done after witnessing the scene it aims to describe,—“go thou and do likewise,” the writer will have attained an ample reward for this effort to recommend the institution of Sunday-Schools throughout our country. He feels no stronger assurance of any thing in this life,—were they generally established upon proper principles, than that every man, woman, and child in the community, capable of receiving instruction, might be taught to read and write in less than two years;—under circumstances too, the most favourable that can well be conceived to the attainment of sound morals and genuine religion. There is nothing which has ever been thought of, that appears so well calculated to inspire those general feelings of reciprocal kindness, benevolence, and philanthropy which should always influence the conduct of the different classes of society towards each other;—nothing better suited to draw closer all those ties of social harmony, mutual good-will, and char-

ity in its comprehensive sense, upon which the domestic happiness of every community in a great measure depends:—nothing so admirably adapted to banish forever from the world, that detestable spirit of Sectarism which for so many ages, has proved the poison and the curse of true christianity. Bible Societies heretofore, have furnished the only occasions where christians of all denominations unite and co-operate for one general purpose. Sunday Schools organised upon the same liberal plan will do the same thing, with this great additional advantage, that the good which *they* achieve will be brought more immediately home to the business, and to the bosoms of every man, woman, and child, in every neighbourhood. In fact, they should be made to work hand in hand, for I am thoroughly persuaded that thus allied, they can and will do as much, under the blessing of that being to whom we owe every good and perfect gift, towards *really christianizing* (if I may be allowed the expression) the different sects of christians, as all other plans for this object which have ever been thought of, put together. Do not imagine, that in this [apparently derogatory] remark, I mean to include public worship and preaching. These are practices established and sanctioned by *that word* from which there is no appeal;—but even *they*, it must be admitted, are sometimes conducted in such a way, as rather to divide, than to unite the universal church of God.

Though last, not least, I beg leave to state *another* most beneficial effect which these Sunday-Schools evidently produce. The act of teaching the children, and attending to the topics and modes of instruction occasions a reaction upon the teachers and spectators, in which some of our worst passions are made to co-operate with some of our best feelings for salutary purposes. Thus, if we attempt publicly to inculcate upon others the necessity of fulfilling our moral and religious duties, we necessarily become, —if not more active in the conscientious performance of them, at least, more circumspect in avoiding their

open, positive violation:—and this avoidance of evil, is the incipient step to the doing of good. To contradict one's own precepts by our conduct, in the presence of so many witnesses committed to our care for the purposes of moral and religious instruction, in the full confidence that we will not abuse so sacred a trust, is equally repugnant to pride and to vanity, as it is to every principle of virtue and of honour.

Again, the children both in school and at home, are apt to ask questions in regard to their Catechisms and Testaments, which the individuals consulted, are ashamed not to be able to answer;—and thus many have been induced, seriously— and with motives gradually becoming better and better, to study their bibles, together with the general doctrines of christianity, who had thought but too little about either of them before.

But were I to enlarge sir, on this interesting subject, as much as I feel disposed to do, I should encroach more on your time and attention, than I wish. Let it suffice therefore to conclude with this general remark;— that in whatever way we consider Sunday-Schools, we cannot but feel the most entire conviction, that they highly merit all the encouragement which an enlightened, liberal, and moral people can possibly bestow on such establishments.

March 30th, 1820.

From the Panoplist, for March.

MISSION AND SCHOOL AT BRANAIRD.
 [The Prudential Committee of the A. B. C. F. M. in order to secure the most satisfactory and authentic accounts of the mission among the Cherokees, and thus sustain the confidence of the Christian public in the plan of operations there commenced, at an early period appointed a Visiting Committee from among highly respectable individuals in the state of Tennessee. The following is the second Report of this Committee:]

Brainerd, December 13, 1819.

The Visiting Committee have not been able to make arrangements to visit this missionary station a second

time before the present date; and but two of their number have had it in their power to attend even now. The Rev. William Eagleton, of Kings-ton, (Tenn.) has been obliging enough to come with us, and will sign this report as a spectator and witness of the examination of the state of the mission.

Since the date of the last report, there have been considerable improvements made. Four cabins have been built for the accommodation of the pupils, besides a large cabin house, in which the girls are taught. There is also the frame of a barn raised and covered, which will be commodious and useful when finished. The whole farm is enclosed by excellent fences, and about thirteen acres of fresh land have been cleared; eight of which have been done by the labor of the boys in the school in the morning and evening. The last season the farm was cultivated as follows: six acres in wheat, five in rye, and thirty in corn, besides potatoes, turnips, and a large garden.

The live stock belonging to this station, was reported to us as being pretty numerous; and what we saw, was in good condition. There are ten horses, seventy horned cattle, thirty sheep, and hogs of all sizes about one hundred and fifty. There belongs to the station some other property, as a cart, three waggons, a yoke of oxen, farming utensils, &c.

Since your Committee last visited this station, the school has been divided, and the girls and boys are now taught in separate houses. The Rev. William Chamberlain teaches the boys and directs them when out of school. Miss Sarah Hoyt teaches the girls, and directs their employment when out of school. The number of boys in the school is 42; the number of the girls 25. A few more as we are informed, entered in each school who are now absent; some on visits to their parents, and some on account of sickness and for fear of it. The pupils are under the age of fifteen, except two males, who may be twenty or upwards, and two females, who may be about eighteen or nineteen. A great many of them have entered

since our last visit, and some of them have been here but a short time. The great majority are making very pleasing progress, both in their studies, and in learning to speak the English language.

The order and good conduct of these children in school, at the table, and in the church are truly exemplary. Their cheerfulness in yielding obedience to all that is required of them, either in or out of school is rarely exceeded by the best managed children among ourselves.

The facility with which they learn to write, has often been remarked: the specimens which we have seen of the writing of the present scholars confirm the fact. Their progress in spelling and reading is encouraging, considering the difficulty they have to encounter in speaking and pronouncing our language. Many of them have committed to memory a part of the Assembly's Catechism and some chapters of the New Testament, which they repeated with ease.

The instructors have adopted a method of treating the scholars which meets our most cordial approbation, and must have the happiest effect. After supper, they are all collected in the girl's school house, and are seated in order on the right and left, and in front. A hymn is sung by memory, in which all join: then questions are proposed by Mr. Chamberlain on the first principles of the Christian religion, which all answer. Then the reasons for the answer which has been given, are demanded. They answer again in the language of Holy Writ. After questioning them in this manner awhile, another hymn is sung; then questions are proposed in the same manner, thus alternating questions, and singing an hour or two. The exercises are closed by prayer. Perhaps no expedient could be chosen, better calculated to have the children rooted and grounded in the first principles of our holy religion, than this. Your committee witnessed with peculiar sensations, the effect produced on some of them. They were attentive, solemn, and tender even to tears.

An excellence in the management of this missionary station is, that the pupils are not only taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, with the principles and worship inculcated in the word of God,—but they are instructed in the most useful arts of civilized life. The boys learn the use of the hoe and axe, while the girls learn the use of the spinning wheel and the needle. The instructress of the girls informed us, that since the 16th of March last, the girls had made eighty garments, such as shirts, pantaloons, &c. without including smaller articles; that they had pieced thirteen bedquilts, and quilted nine. We examined a part of this work, and it appeared to be well done.

Your Committee, on their first visit, were not more affected by any thing relating to the whole mission, than by the infant church here planted in the wilderness. We are happy to find, that it has increased by the addition of such as we hope shall be saved. Four of the natives have made a public profession of religion and two blacks, since our last visit. We have also seen or heard of five or six, who are under strong impressions from the spirit of God; some of whom give evidence of being the the hopeful subjects of a saving change of heart. All, with whom we have met, converse with great freedom, concerning their lost and helpless state, as sinners, their views and feelings respecting the Saviour, and with an artless simplicity not easily described.

Among the various circumstances, that must interest the feelings of any Christian friend of man, who may visit this station, a short detail of one or two will not be unacceptable to the Board. Last Christmas, a young man, called John Arch, who had been born and bred in the mountains near the confines of South Carolina, happened to be at Knoxville, where he met with Mr. Hall, who informed him, that there was a school in the nation. As soon as he went home, he took his gun and wandered off in search of the place, which, we hope has proved to him the house of God and the gate of heaven. After

travelling one hundred and fifty miles, he arrived at the missionary station; told the missionaries he had come to attend school, and offered them his gun, his only property for clothes. His appearance was so wild and forbidding, the missionaries said they hesitated to receive him, inasmuch as he was upwards of 20 years of age. He would not be put off. They took him on trial. In a short time, he discovered a thoughtful concern about his soul, and now gives the most satisfactory evidence of a gracious change of heart. His thirst for knowledge is great. He has learned to read and write well; though he has not been more than ten months at school. Sometime after he became serious, he was accused of having done some improper act; he was conscious of innocence, and could not well brook the false charge. That evening he was missing, and the next morning the conclusion was, that he had gone off. But about nine o'clock he came in. Upon being questioned respecting his absence, he gave the following account. "I felt angry, and knew that it was wicked, but I could not suppress it; and I went to seek the Saviour, that he might reconcile my heart." It appeared that he had been praying and wrestling with God all night. He says "he often feels strongly inclined to tell the Indians about God and the Saviour, but he knows so little, he thinks it would not please God." He desires to obtain an education, that he may preach. The history of this young man, and the account he gives of himself are so pleasing, that brother Eagleton, with the advice and consent of the missionaries, has agreed to take him home with him, to superintend his course of preparation for the Gospel ministry.

The writer of the *Apocalypse*, beheld a great multitude of all nations and kindred and people and tongues standing before the throne and before the Lamb, who cried out with a loud voice, "saying, salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." We cannot but regard, among other things, the following fact as a fulfillment in part of

this prophetic vision. Two of the most advanced female scholars, members of the church have put into verse, in the Cherokee language, a number of hymns, and composed one entirely. These hymns we heard sung with great interest. We send you one of them with its translation. That this people and their language should be employed in hymning the praises of heaven, is among the strange events of the day.

Are not the wilderness and the solitary place beginning to be glad, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose? Here the ransomed of the Lord are returning and coming to Zion with songs—literally *with songs*—and everlasting joy; they have obtained joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing have fled away. It is enough to warm a heart of ice and dissolve a heart of stone, to see and hear from these late savages of the forest, the evidence of all conquering grace on their hearts. Has not the Board—has not the christian public—already received an ample reward for all the toil and expense, to which they have submitted, even if another immortal being should not be gathered into the fold of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls?

On the whole, your Committee are more and more convinced of the practicability of civilizing and christianizing this long neglected people.—They are capable of every noble feeling of our nature to a high degree: of the warmest affection, tenderness and gratitude. The children are sprightly and sagacious, and, on many subjects, discover an excellent judgment.

The sacrament of the Lord's supper was administered the day after we arrived, it being the Sabbath. The congregation contained more than one hundred: they behaved with great decorum. Father Hoyt presented the little Osage captive whom he has adopted, for baptism. He was called *John Osage Ross*.

Isaac Anderson,
Matthew Donald,
William Eagleton.

REVIVAL OF RELIGION.

Extract of a letter from a gentleman at Athens, in Ohio, to his friend in Ross County.

March, 27th, 1820.

I have thought proper to burden you with another letter. The reformation hinted in my last, has greatly increased, and is still increasing. Yesterday, we had the privilege of commemorating the love of our departed Lord and Saviour; and the inexpressible joy to see the number of 37 added to the church; who professed their faith in Jesus Christ, while the tear of love and affection flowed down their cheeks. This solemn, but pleasant scene, drew tears from the most of the congregation present. My soul was absorbed in love; and I could say, "Surely this is the house of God, and the gate of heaven!" Those, who have been admitted, are nearly all young men and women.

Christians are much engaged for Christ. Fathers and mothers, whose children have made Christ their choice, are filled with joy and gratitude to God, while they clasp their offspring to their hearts.

Among the 37, I saw an old grey-headed father who seemed to be on the margin of the grave. My heart was not a little pleased to see such a sight—the aged coming at the eleventh hour of life. This is the work of the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes,

The inquiry, what shall I do to be saved? is heard in almost every family and street in town. The number now seeking the Lord is very considerable. The question is put, How do you feel in Christ? Sometimes it is answered with joy, and triumph in the cross of the Redeemer; and, at other times, with a deep sigh, and complaint of a heart hard as a rock.

It is a heavenly season with us; and I thought it would be too selfish to have all the feast to myself. Before this sentence was completed, several friends of Christ came to my room, and solicited me to attend a meeting appointed for the mourners to express their feelings to each other. I accordingly went; and when I enter-

ed the room, I beheld about 35 persons, bathed in tears, and lamenting the folly of their past conduct. They rose up, one by one, and pledged themselves, that they would serve the Lord, let others do as they might. I never witnessed such a scene as this. There is scarcely an exception to the mourners and rejoicers, in this place.

I cannot forbear mentioning the characters that are seeking Christ. Old and young, and middle aged, Atheists, Deists, and Universalists, have found their foundation shaken to its centre. Moralists and the grossly profane have fled to Christ.

I lament that I can tell you so little of the harvest and great in-gathering of souls.—May the Lord give you such a harvest! [Rel. Rem.

PALESTINE.

The Rev. *Pliny Fisk*, and the Rev. *Levi Parsons*, sailed from Boston for Smyrna, on the 3d of Nov. 1819. They touched at Malta, conferred with Mr. Jowett, and reached Smyrna about the middle of January. They were received with great cordiality by gentlemen, to whom they were introduced, and were encouraged to proceed in their work. They would apply themselves diligently, for a season, to the study of languages prevalent in Western Asia. The contemplated seat of their mission is Jerusalem.

[*Boston Recorder.*

OSAGE MISSION.

The friends of the Redeemer will be gratified to learn that a mission is contemplated to the Osage Indians, under the direction of the United Foreign Mission Society. An agent of the Board has already explored the country, and selected a place for the establishment of the mission on the Arkansaw, about 800 miles west of the Mississippi. The mission, so far as the support of schools is concerned, is under the patronage of the national government; while the character and circumstances of the tribe, render the prospect of success unusually flattering. The introduction

of ardent spirits among them is wholly interdicted. By this means as well as by the little intercourse which they have had with the whites, they are probably less corrupted than most other tribes of our natives. They express earnest wishes for the establishment of this mission. It is proposed to send among them a mission family, consisting of ministers, instructors, mechanics, &c. to the number of about twenty persons. The Rev. Wm F. Vail, of Guilford, with his family, has offered himself to the mission.

"The friends of missions could hardly have selected a more suitable person for a missionary, than the Rev. Mr. Vail. Surely the hearts of all men are in the hands of the Lord; and the faith of believers must be greatly strengthened in the assurance, that the Lord is about to gather in the heathen for his inheritance, when such men of talents and piety voluntarily go forward in this great work."

[*R. Intel.*]

FOREIGN.

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

SOUTH AMERICA.

Whatever affects the political or moral condition of this extensive country, must be interesting to our readers. Moral degradation is extended in almost every quarter. And even those parts which are civilized, should be no less the subject of our anxious solicitude, than those in which paganism still enshrouds its numerous votaries in darkness. It would seem to be the peculiar duty of christians in the United States, to take an active part in carrying the gospel to this section of the new world; and we hope the correspondence opened with that country by the "*United Foreign Missionary Society*," will result in their establishing a mission there at no distant period. We now direct the attention of our readers to a summary account of what has been done at Demerara, by the London Missionary Society. The latest accounts for the missionaries are dated 15th Sept 1819.

Demerara.—At *Providence Chapel Town*, Mr. Davies labours with great success, although, he meets with much opposition. There are more than 700 children who meet in the chapel "to repeat the scriptures, catechisms, and hymns, which their parents, and others who attend the chappel, diligently teach them by heart, on the plantations. A great many children, both bond and free, constantly attend divine worship. The sight cheers my soul, and leads me to expect much, very much, from the rising genera-tion.

"The congregation is chiefly composed of negro slaves, belonging to plantations in the country. Since the beginning of this year, thirty have been added to the church. Most of them date their first serious impres-sions from the time I used to preach in the house I rented from Mrs. Post, before I built *Providence Chapel*; twenty-eight of these are negroes, belonging to *Plantation Providence*, the property of the Hon. James Johnstone. This gentleman has al-ways given the greatest encourage-ment to his negroes to attend the preaching of the missionaries. A few weeks ago he called on me, previous to his sailing to England, and gave them the highest character for sobri-ety and industry, and said their con-duct was exemplary in every respect, in their humble station. Mr. John-stone is one of the most enlightened gentlemen in the colonies, and such a testimony in favour of the religious instruction of negroes, carries great weight.

"The members of the church, and indeed the people in general, who attend, men, women, and children, seem to have caught so much of the true missionary spirit, that wherever they go, they teach the heathen around them, as well as they can, the divine religion of Christ, and tell them of his redeeming love."

At Elliot's Town, and West Coast, the Lord is carrying on his work with power. True religion prospers a-mong the negroes, and others appear concerned for their salvation. "A woman," says Mr. Davies, "who came

to me to purchase a New Testament, was asked if she could read. She answered, no; but would try to learn. She was informed that if she would come to me, as soon as she could read a chapter, I would give her a Bible. She came in a short time, and claimed the fulfilment of the promise, for, she said, she had not only learned to read a chapter herself in the New Testament, but had taught a girl, about twelve years of age, to read also; and since that time she has taught three others to read the word of God."

Georgetown — Every Monday evening, a meeting is held of those who appear to be converted, (eighteen in number) for the purpose of instructing them more fully in the principles of the christian religion. In July last, an auxiliary society was formed, and preparations made for establishing one on the West Coast.

Le Resouvenier. — Mr. Smith's preaching has been attended with success. "The church is growing in numbers, and we trust in knowledge. Eight persons have been lately received into church-fellowship: two of them, in relating what God had done for their souls, stated, that they were first induced to attend the chapel out of curiosity, soon after my arrival, perhaps with a view of hearing a stranger preach, and that the Lord so convinced them of their sinfulness, as to make them seek and pray for mercy. One of them, in particular, it seems, inquired of every person he had an opportunity of speaking to, what he should do to be saved; the other 6 were wrought upon by gentler means, particularly by chatechising. The number of church members is 107. The number of baptized, that usually attend, is not easily ascertained. I have baptized 249, of whom about 180 are adults. The congregation of late is rather increased. Many who have received the truth in the love of it, are removed to distant parts of the colony; where, I am happy to learn, they embrace every opportunity of catechising those, who before, were in the grossest ignorance as to a Saviour. Many of the negroes belonging to a planta-

tion in the neighbourhood of our chapel, who were formerly all together indifferent about religion, have been greatly benefitted by the removal of some of brother Davies's people, who, as soon as they came among them, began to catechise them, to bring them to hear the word of God. As we found it impracticable to build a new chapel, we have repaired the old one, and altered it by taking down the said gallery. When once this was determined on, and the negroes had contributed a sufficient sum for the purpose, they agreed to form themselves into an Auxiliary Missionary Society, which was accordingly established about three months ago. A free young man of colour is secretary. It is with peculiar pleasure we report the attention which the young people pay to religion. Great numbers of them regularly attend the chapel, and seem to take a pleasure in being catechised.

"All our meetings are well attended, the missionary prayer meeting especially. I have shown the negroes the pictures of the idols in the transactions. Their opinion of them is, that they must have been made in secret, for if the people had seen the workmen make them, they could never be so stupid as to pay them religious honours. They feel pity for the people who are living in heathen darkness and superstition, and are willing to do all in their power to assist in sending them the gospel.

"A young man who lately visited Demarara on business, thus writes to a relation in England:—'the missionaries here have behaved very politely to me; and, though they are much opposed, they are prospering in their work. I attended the prayer-meeting yesterday morning, and was much delighted. About fifty negroes were present; but no whites except ourselves. The Rev. Mr. Davies told them that I came from *Buckra-land*, and that I have an uncle who is a missionary in Otaheite; where, as they had heard, the people destroyed their idols: he said, he hoped they would pray for me when at home, as well as at the chapel;

they replied, as with one voice, 'Yes; always, Massa.'

"Mr. Davies then catechised them on the Scriptures, and their knowledge is surprising. He then called upon one of them to pray: he prayed earnestly, and as well as any common English Christian. In the midst of his prayer, he said thus:—' O gracious God! do please be merciful to our massa here, dat have come cross de sea; we tank de dat he be come all safe; he have many dangers here to see; but dou, O Lord, can keep him from dem all; keep him from sickness, from bad men, and make him happy within. Bless his good uncle, who is dy servant, who sent by de to poor men who one time did pray to god dat was not God. Blessed Jesus, me not be quite glad till salvation cover de world like de water cover de sea.'

"I wish that all my London friends could have been witnesses of the delightful scene."

"After breakfast, about 400 negroes assembled to public worship, and the Lord's Supper was administered to the members of the church. After the congregation departed, 100 black children remained to be instructed in their catechism; their black teachers take such pains with them, that numbers of children, who cannot read a letter, know the catechisms of Dr. Watts, and the Assembly's catechism, perfectly well.

St. Helena.—A second Auxiliary Missionary Society has been formed in this little island. The first is composed chiefly of persons in humble life, including some slaves; the latter is composed chiefly of officers belonging to the garrison.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Charles Wilson, Missionary, dated Otaheite, (Waugh's Place. Matavai,) 19th October, 1818.

After the conversation meeting last Monday, a man followed me to my house, and asked me whether it was usual and proper for persons to weep when they prayed among the bushes. He and his prayers were accompanied with weeping. I asked him why he wept? He replied, that

it was when he thought of his disobedience and rebellion against God, and of the love of Christ, and his death for sin and sinners; and when he thought of God's goodness towards him, and the return he had made, 'only bad behaviour' as he expressed it, then he could not refrain from weeping.

Extract of another letter from Mr. Charles Wilson.

The Brethren have sent home a few copies of the Gospel of St. Luke, which they printed at Eimeo. The press is now removed to Huaheine, and when Mr. Ellis wrote, Nov. 24th, 1818, the dwelling-house and printing-office were nearly finished, and they hoped to get the press to work very shortly. So eager are the again people to obtain copies of the Gospel, that it is thought, 10,000 will scarcely satisfy the demand.

Some of the brethren were about, if possible, to make another printing-press for Otaheite. We fear, however, that this is scarcely practicable; nor will it be necessary, as two additional presses have been sent out for their use.

ANECDOTE.

A good woman, who used to say she should never want—her God would supply her need; in persecuting times was taken up and carried before an unjust judge for attending a conventicle, as they styled her offence; who, on seeing her rejoiced over her, and tauntingly said, I have often wished to have you in my power, and now I shall send you to prison, and then how will you be fed? to which she replied; If it is my heavenly Father's pleasure, I shall be fed from your table;—and that was literally the case, for the judge's wife being present at her examination, and being greatly struck with the good woman's firmness, took care to send her victuals from her table, so that she was comfortably supplied all the time she was in confinement; & in this she found her reward; for the Lord was pleased to work on her soul to her real conversion.